

# The Academy and Literature.

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## The Literary Week.

WHAT are the ethics of dedication? Mr. Abbott's volume on Macedonian Folklore is, we observe, dedicated "without permission" to the author of "The Golden Bough"! Mr. Fraser will probably not have any objection to this reference to himself in a volume where "many a nursery rhyme, shorn of all its familiar simplicity, has been—

Started at home and hunted in the dark  
To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's ark."

Mr. Osborne's life of Father Dolling is dedicated to "the Sisters, whose untiring labours lightened the labour of his toil." From other publications of the week we select two significant volumes:—

### IDEAS OF GOOD AND EVIL. By W. B. Yeats.

A volume containing nineteen essays full of thought and beauty. Some of the titles run: "Magic," "William Blake and the Imagination," "Symbolism in Painting," "The Symbolism of Poetry," "The Autumn of the Body." Mr. Yeats turns to his favourite subject of symbolism, and illustrates it from the work of Blake and Shelley, Maeterlinck and Morris. The opening essay deals with the question "What is 'Popular Poetry'?" Are there many more "than the ten thousand the prophet saw," asks Mr. Yeats, who speak the English tongue, who can tell good verses from bad ones? Those ten thousand must preach their faith that "the imagination is the man himself." It is a real delight to see a book such as this, a book of pure literature, insight, and atmosphere.

### HAMPSHIRE DAYS. By W. H. Hudson.

A true country book by the author of "Nature in Downland." The greater part of the matter is new, but a few magazine articles have been drawn upon. Mr. Hudson writes in his characteristic way of nature in the broad as well as in infinite detail. The first chapter touches on small mammals, squirrels, the cuckoo controversy, and concludes with a "Discourse on mistaken kindness, pain and death in nature, the annual destruction

of bird life, and the young cuckoo's instinct." The volume is dedicated to "Sir Edward and Lady Grey, Northumbrians, with Hampshire written in their Hearts."

WE have often had occasion to comment on the number of unnecessary books which are published. Amongst such unnecessary books we should place a volume just issued, entitled "Arthur James Balfour: the Man and his Work." We cannot but think that this stout compilation of three hundred and sixty-seven pages might have waited. In his preface the author says: "It may appear somewhat singular that no biography of Mr. Balfour has hitherto been published. . . . We see nothing singular in this at all. We hardly suppose that a small portrait of Mr. Balfour as an Eton boy, set in a large white margin, can be of particular interest, even to his many admirers. This kind of contemporary biography is little to our liking.

LITERATURE seems to be getting a footing again in the House of Commons. Mr. Yoxall published a novel recently, and next week Mr. Lowther's play, "The Gordian Knot," is to be produced by Mr. Tree. The association of Mr. George Wyndham with literature has been a long and close one. We find in a volume of letters, to which we shall return, addressed by Ruskin to two ladies who bear well-known names, a preface by the Chief Secretary for Ireland which concludes thus: "In Ruskin . . . in his life and in these letters, there is a special note of courage. His despair over all that is known of human politics, and all that may be guessed of their future development, throws up in a higher light the gracious courage with which, whilst treading a *via dolorosa*, he placed a posy before every shrine of Beauty and Gentleness and Love."

THE announcement of the engagement of Mr. Sidney Colvin and Mrs. Sitwell is of particular interest to all Stevensonians. R. L. S., as readers of his correspondence know, had a deep affection for both Mr. Colvin and Mrs. Sitwell.

WHEN "A Journey to Nature" was published, its author was hailed as a new and original writer. But the "J. P. M." of the title-page was Mr. Andrew C. Wheeler, whose death was recently recorded. Mr. Wheeler was an active American journalist who, at the age of sixty, cut himself adrift from his old literary associations and disappeared, so far as the reading public knew. But he disappeared to do his own work in his own way, and some interesting particulars of his later years are given by Mr. E. W. Bacon in the American "World's Work." To start upon a new track at an age when most men feel that their best has been accomplished required a rare strength of purpose and a determined outlook. "J. P. M." was quite conscious of the risks which he ran. Mr. Bacon writes:—

One very important question involved in this change will be appreciated by every man of letters who lives by his pen. To give up his journalistic work meant to give up his emoluments with his market; in other words, to commence life afresh. For possibly the first time in his life this man must become acquainted with the keen disappointment and self-distrust that are so frequently enclosed with rejected manuscripts. The re-adjustment could not be accomplished in a day or a year. That it was accomplished at all seems little short of the miraculous.

Some of the letters written to Mr. Bacon by "J. P. M." have the self-revelation and charm of a real personality. When the country experiment was in full swing, there came that feeling of remoteness and isolation which comes to all men who have known the rush and fever of packed cities:—

Hibernation is played out. I have chewed more or less on my own vitals this winter. Solitude may make a man a philosopher, but it puts too high a premium on the grave. There is such a thing as erecting meditations into a mausoleum. I may go out this spring better equipped with reflections, but they are not negotiable—I have got to that intellectual point where I want to hit somebody with a pen, and not a fountain pen either. I have piled up a lot of "copy" this winter, and I am beginning to suspect that I have piled it up where moths do not corrupt and thieves break not through and steal—that is to say, the thieves do not want it. However, the sap is running in the maple trees—why not in the hibernating scribbler?

The sap ran to good purpose in the "hibernating scribbler"; he came into closer touch with nature, and at the same time his interest in men and the best in literature deepened. One of his latest sayings was this: "It must be an awfully lonesome world to those men who outgrow everybody in it, and I honestly think that when a man reaches that distressing point of development he ought to be looking for a leasehold in some other world." In a copy of "Amiel's Journal" he wrote:—

Here was a great soul lowering buckets into his own consciousness all his life. They came up brimming and sparkling, but the man never got away from the winch. You will hear its little squeak occasionally. Sometimes his faith gets tired of trying to lift itself in this way and he wants to lie down and rest himself.

Instances are rare in our time of such writers as "J. P. M." His work was good, but one feels that better still was the vital and alluring personality behind it.

ALL the hawking on Salisbury Plain this year has been done with "haggards." It is a change from Shakespeare's time. A haggard is a wild hawk taken for use when in its adult plumage, a bird of much superior flight to the hand-reared eyas or nestling which mostly served Elizabethan falconers. Shakespeare uses the word in "Much Ado" in its simple noun-sense:—

I know, her spirits are as coy and wild  
As haggards of the rock.

The modern falconer, more skilled than the mediæval, does not much consider, it seems, the word's adjectival sense of "intractable." In Shakespeare's mind that sense was inherent in it, and when Othello says, "If I do prove her haggard," he is thinking back to the dread possibility suggested by Iago's first unspoken hint, that Desdemona was "wild" before he married her. We miss the full, clear meaning of that bitter imagery:—

If I do prove her haggard,  
Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings  
I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind  
To prey at fortune.

To get the full force of that passage it is almost necessary to see the sport and mark that the jesses go with the bird.

THE taming and use of adult falcons has long been known, however, in India, a fact which can surprise nobody who saw the little collection of birds and beasts shown by some Indian jugglers at Earl's Court last year—the health and good temper of those wild creatures were so remarkable. What he saw in India may well have given Mr. Kipling his supreme idea of a kind of familiarity between man and all things *fera natura*, realised in the wonderful "Jungle Book." Mowgli is after all a type. Mr. Oxer, the falconer of the Old Hawking Club at Lyndhurst, has a touch of Mowgli's skill, and some of the most successful flights on Salisbury Plain this spring have been accomplished with a falcon that was wild two months ago. She came from Holland, where they know how the hawk may be captured. Holland sends us most of the hawks employed in English falconry. With hand-reared birds it would be almost impossible to hawk the sea-gull, a sport for which rook-hawking in the spring is only a preparation and weeding-out process, training the strongest falcons.

THE following inscription for a sword of honour has been sent to us by Mr. Herbert Trench:—

Draw me not! Let your laurels round me wreath,  
You that have borne, since you began to breathe,  
The soul within you ready to unsheathe.

It was anticipated by most reasonable and clear-thinking people that Mr. Justice Ridley's judgment in the case of *McQuire v. The "Western Morning News,"* would be reversed, and that anticipation has been realised. The question was of much greater importance than the £100 originally awarded to the plaintiff involved, and the "Western Morning News" is to be congratulated on the result of its appeal, and thanked for carrying the matter through. Its criticism of Mr. McQuire's play was severe, but no personal malice was alleged; it came within the bounds of perfectly fair criticism. If actions could be taken successfully against newspapers for severe criticisms of plays or books, there would, at once, be an end to all honest critical work. The matter was not one for the personal opinion of the jury, and in that point the jury was misdirected. The conclusion of the judgment by the Master of the Rolls was as follows:—

Further, as to misdirection, I think that, though at the outset of his summing-up the learned Judge correctly laid down the law as to the extent of the defendants' right of criticism, the later part of his summing-up may have helped the jury to apply the standard of their own taste to the appreciation of the thing criticized, and to measure the rights of the critic accordingly. We have had excerpts from the play, including the songs and the stage directions, read to us; and I think it right to say that, in my opinion, it would be



matter of regret for all well-wishers of the stage if an honest critic were debarred from commenting in the sense of this criticism on such a production.

Newspapers have often suffered at the hands of juries. This judgment should go far to save them in future from irritating and unnecessary attack.

THERE are advantages, no doubt, of various kinds, in being a President. If he happens to be an author, for instance, his books will sell. President Roosevelt has written some fourteen books, and there is an increasing demand for them in America. They are now being published in a new and limited edition.

By the death of Mr. W. T. Maud, the correspondent and artist of the "Daily Graphic," another name has to be struck off the narrowing list of war correspondents. Mr. Maud had seen much of war during the past eight years; he was in Armenia at the time of the 1895 massacres, in the following year he was in Cuba, and later was in Thessaly and the Soudan. He was in Ladysmith during the siege, and when G. W. Steevens died he was at his side. Concerning that tragic incident the war correspondent of the "Daily Chronicle" says: "From first to last Maud nursed him with the patience and gentleness of a woman, and the skill of a trained nurse. It was to him that Steevens said his last conscious words about this being a 'rather sideways ending,' and I have never known grief more prostrating than was Maud's after we had carried our friend—our man of genius—to the grave." Mr. Maud escaped the dangers of flying bullets; he died of syncope. But he died in harness.

MR. EDMUND GOSSE the other day had an article in the "Daily Chronicle" on "The Irony of Anatole France," *apropos* of M. France's latest novel, "Histoire Comique." Irony in England, as Mr. Gosse very pertinently pointed out, is suspect:—

No one who has endeavoured for the last hundred years to use irony in England as an imaginative medium has escaped failure. However popular he has been until that moment, his admirers then slip away from him, silently, as Tennyson's did when he wrote the later sections of "Maud," and still more strikingly as Matthew Arnold's did when he published "Friendship's Garland." The result of the employment of irony in this country is that people steal noiselessly away from the ironist as if he had been guilty in their presence of a social incongruity.

The fact is that our national temperament does not lend itself to irony—certainly not to such delicate and elusive irony as that of M. Anatole France. There is no more subtle mind at work to-day than that which created the inimitable volumes of the "Histoire Contemporaine." But the irony of M. France is, as Mr. Gosse said, "a tender and consolatory raillery, based upon compassion." There are few European reputations to-day of which it may so confidently be asserted that they will live as the reputation of M. Anatole France.

OUR correspondent "I. H." should be fully satisfied by the response to his letter printed in our last issue. We have received over a dozen communications pointing out that the lines occur in Campbell's "Pleasures of Hope." One of our correspondents says: "I am afraid 'I. H.' is a bit of a wag. The lines about which he inquires terminate Campbell's 'Pleasures of Hope.' Campbell, if my memory has not grown too averse to the picturesque, is the poet who would walk three miles to change a comma into a semicolon. How many miles would he not have walked to reclaim the whole line lost in your correspondent's quotation?"

APROPOS of a recent comment in these columns concerning "Wee MacGregor," a correspondent asks us in "what way" we do not like the book. Our statement was not that we did not like it, but that we tried, unsuccessfully, to read it. Our correspondent adds: "if I may say so, I myself, after some hearty laughs, had to put the book aside, as my room seemed to fill with these 'Glesca' folk, and I felt inclined to open the window. But to May, 1903, Realism which recognises Truth as Beauty, even when she wields a dung-fork, that should be a recommendation." Since our correspondent's letter reached us we have been looking at the book again. Perhaps our primary difficulty is that we know little more of the Scots dialect, and particularly of the Glasgow dialect, than we do of Erse; we get tired of the perpetual "speirin'" of Wee MacGregor and his parents and relations, and also of Wee MacGregor's passion for eating sweets. Also, we are convinced that dialect may be run to death. This, however, is more a generalisation than a remark applicable to "Wee MacGregor," which was a book frankly written for a particular public. What has surprised us is its success outside that particular public. Our reading of it has convinced us that the book has both humour and reality, however, and for that we are ready to forgive certain touches of sentimentality which have shaken our nerves. There is always a market for humour, even outside Scotland. We notice that Mr. Barry Pain's "De Omnibus" is in its ninety-eighth thousand.

THE Newdigate Prize for English verse was not awarded this year; it is over fifty years since such a lapse has occurred. The subject was "Charles I. at Oxford." Perhaps the subject suggested too much romance, and possibly the judges were afraid of Jacobite enthusiasm. It strikes us as being the most hopeful subject set for many years.

THE uncertainties of literature are being continually discussed, particularly in American literary journals. There is an article on the subject in the current New York "Critic." The writer had access to a book kept by an unnamed author in which he entered the titles of all his articles and stories and the magazines to which they were sent. From such a record nothing, after all, is to be learned: some manuscripts were sent out a dozen times before acceptance, others only two or three times. That kind of thing is inevitable: we ourselves know of cases where manuscripts have been sent out a score of times, and finally have found a home in unexpectedly high places. The point that strikes us in this article, however, is the curiously commercial attitude of this unnamed author. He is reported to have said:—

In my own case—and I am making a fairly good living by my literary work, although I do not claim the right to be classed among the "well-known writers" as yet—I never destroy anything that I have written. I used to do it, and I do not think I exaggerate when I say I never destroyed anything that I did not have cause to regret it, later. The time always has come when that story or that article could have been used to advantage. So now, when anything has "gone the limit," I carefully file it away and wait.

We really have nothing to say to the man who never destroys anything he has written. He may be an admirable mechanic, but literature is not a question of mechanics. We think of Guy de Maupassant, and are satisfied.

THE Toirac prize of four thousand francs, founded in favour of the author of the best play presented at the Comédie-Française in the course of the year, has been awarded by the French Academy to M. Maurice Donnay, the author of "L'Autre Danger."

On Tuesday Mr. Israel Zangwill presided at a dinner of the Maccabees at the St. James's Restaurant. Herr Joseph Israels was the guest, and in proposing the toast of the evening, Mr. Zangwill named, as examples of Dutch art, Spinoza and Joseph Israels, and indicated how a nation's art is influenced by physical surroundings. Dutch art, said Mr. Zangwill, was the expression of the joy of life and a "perpetual grace to God for the beauty of common things." That was well said. Mr. Zangwill suggested that it was Herr Israel's Jewish nature which had enabled him to make so great a contribution to Dutch art, for the predominant note of his work was the pathos and tragedy of life.

THE front of the house known to postmen and directories as No. 6, Wine Office Court, Fleet Street, has been condemned as unsafe, and will shortly be removed. Goldsmith lived there, after leaving Green Arbour Court, from 1760 to 1764, and it is possible that there he wrote "The Vicar of Wakefield." Our literary landmarks are fast disappearing, but when a house-front begins to bulge there is nothing else for it, we suppose, but removal. The pity is that remedies are not applied in time.

THE authors of "Wisdom while you Wait" suggested various uses for the Insidecomplectuar Brittaniaware, one of which was practically demonstrated the other day at Southampton. Lord Avebury was to open the new art gallery, and just before the proceedings commenced it was ascertained that he proposed to read his address. A kind of lectern was improvised by piling books upon a table, and those books were part of Southampton's set of the "indispensable work."

## Bibliographical.

MR. ANDREW LANG kindly reminds me that he contributed to the "Cornhill" for February 1900, a paper called "The Mystery of Lord Bateman," in the course of which he dealt with the "Loving Ballad" and its history. In regard to the versions illustrated by Thackeray and Cruikshank, the conclusion at which he arrived was this: that "Cruikshank and Thackeray used a text with merely verbal differences, which was popular among the least educated classes early in this century. Again, Thackeray contributed the notes and critical apparatus to Cruikshank's version. For this the internal evidence of style is overpowering: no other man wrote in the manner and with the peculiar humour of Mr. Titmarsh." In opposition to this, a correspondent of Mr. Lang's wrote in 1900 as follows: "Somewhere about 1840 there was a frequent visitor at our house named Burnett, who had married a sister of Charles Dickens. He said, as you state, that Cruikshank had got the words from a pot-house singer. He added that Cruikshank sang or hummed the tune to him, and he gave it the musical notation which follows the preface. He also said that Charles Dickens wrote the notes."

Nevertheless, Mr. Lang finds it "impossible," he tells me, "to believe that anyone but Thackeray wrote the notes to Cruikshank's version." That version came out originally in 1839, being published by one Charles Tilt of Fleet Street. There was an edition, issued by Bogue, in 1851; another in 1870, brought out by Bell and Daldy; another, by Bell and Sons, in 1883; and yet another, by David Bryce and Sons, Glasgow, in 1886. This last had a preface from the pen of Blanchard Jerrold, including a note from Frederick Locker-Lampson in which he mentions

that he possesses a copy of the 1851 edition. The Bryce text of 1886 is reproduced, it seems, in the thirteenth volume of the Biographical Edition of Thackeray's Works, of course with Thackeray's illustrations, which were first published in 1892. It may be mentioned that the British Museum possesses two texts of the "Loving Ballad," in broadsheet form, dated conjecturally 1830 and 1835. They are practically identical, and represent, no doubt, what Cruikshank derived from the pot-house singer.

Talking of the big book-place in Bloomsbury, I see that a lady novelist is to give us a story which she (or her publisher) describes as "a romance of the British Museum." I doubt not that many a romance has had its origin or its consummation within that stately pile; I doubt if even in the solemn Reading Room the voice of flirtation is wholly unheard. The literary class ought to celebrate the Museum; it is its duty. And I remember some pretty verses by Mr. Ernest Radford (you will find them in "Chambers Twain," 1890, and also in "Old and New," 1895) which tell how two young people took their modest luncheons together in "the dim Egyptian room":—

Love spreads the feast; their lips have met!  
So grace is said, and lingered o'er!  
Grey gods, ye smiled! Nor look ye yet  
All grimly serious as before.

Mr. Radford has further poetised over a "Fragment in the British Museum"—

a stone, no common stone,  
"A fragment"—of a woman's breast.

A correspondent of my Editor's blithely suggests that I should supply a bibliography of the vers-de-société of the nineteenth century. I should not object, if some person, or body of persons, having authority, would kindly decide what vers-de-société is, or is not. There have been three anthologies on the subject—"Lyra Elegantiarum" (1867), "Muses of Mayfair" (1874), and "Songs of Society" (1881)—and in each case the editorial point of view is different from that in the others. Is vers-de-société the poetry of the "beau monde" and "fashion," or is it simply all verse which is light in tone and easy in style?

The announcement in "The Bookman" that Sir Leslie Stephen is to write a volume on Thomas Hobbes for the "English Men of Letters" series is surely belated. "Man of Letters," I suppose, Hobbes was, if only because of his translations from Homer, Aristotle, and Thucydides, and of his "poem" on "The Wonders of the Peak." But it is as a "philosopher" that he is famous and remembered, and very properly he found a place in the "Philosophical Classics" of Messrs. Blackwood, for whom Dr. G. Croom Robertson wrote a monograph, biographical and expository, which was admittedly excellent.

Apparently not much of the late Mr. R. H. Stoddard's literary work found its way across the Atlantic. The American editions of his "Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: a Medley of Prose and Verse" (1882) and of his "Life of Washington Irving" (1886) had some circulation over here; but of late years only two of his books have had English publishers—"The Lion's Cub and Other Verse" (1891) and "Under the Evening Lamp" (1893).

Altogether to be welcomed is the new edition of Arthur Golding's Ovid which Mr. Moring promises us. This version of the Metamorphoses came out (in its complete form) in 1567, and was reprinted in 1575, 1584, 1587, 1593, 1612, and 1675. This shows how popular this version was for a century and more, but during the intervening centuries it has been neglected.

THE BOOKWORM.



## Reviews.

## The Modernity of Homer.

THE ODYSSEY. Translated by J. W. Mackail. Books I.—VIII. (Murray. 5s. net.)

FOUR or five years ago Mr. Mackail printed—we are not sure if it was ever published—an experimental version of the seventh book of the "Odyssey," which was at once recognised by all who saw it as being of quite exceptional quality. That delightful little pamphlet has grown into the present volume, and doubtless, having gone so far, Mr. Mackail will not pause until he has completed his task. This is a translation of the very highest order. A learned scholar, a fastidious critic, and a poet of considerable accomplishment have combined to produce it. Alike for the student familiar with the original and for the unlettered reader anxious to catch as much as possible of the large Homeric utterance, it will at once take rank as the English Homer of our day. And a day which can produce almost at the same moment Mr. Mackail's "Odyssey" and Prof. Gilbert Murray's "Euripides" may claim at least, so far as the minor art of translation is concerned, to hold up its head with the best. Every age may be known by its translations. Chapman's Homer is fully as characteristic of the sixteenth century, Pope's Homer of the eighteenth century, as any original poem which the England of Elizabeth or the England of Anne produced. And Mr. Mackail's work, too, could only have been written in a generation which has taken its conceptions of narrative poetry from the genius of William Morris. It will not be forgotten that Morris himself translated the "Odyssey," translated it with a spilt of archaism and in the saga manner of "Sigurd the Volsung." Mr. Mackail goes for his inspiration to the earlier Morris. His rendering recalls the "Earthly Paradise," with its delight in external beauty, its limpid atmosphere and its pure translucency of colouring. As a sample we will quote one or two of the more famous descriptive passages. Here is that which Mr. Stephen Phillips has made familiar to modern readers, the visit of Hermes to Calypso's isle:—

And now that island far amid the foam  
Reaching, from out the violet sea he clomb  
Over the mainland, to the cavern great  
Wherein the fair-tressed nymph had made her home.  
Within he found her in the cavern-cell:  
Where from a brazier by her, burning well,  
A fire of cloven cedar-wood and pine  
Far through the island sent a goodly smell.  
And in it she with voice melodious sang,  
While through the warp her golden shuttle rang  
As to and fro before the loom she went.  
But round the cave a verdurous forest sprang  
Of poplars and sweet-scented cypresses,  
And alders; and long-pinioned birds in these  
Nested, owls, falcons, chattering cormorants,  
And all that ply their business in the seas.  
But round the hollow cavern trailing went  
A garden-vine with heavy clusters bent:  
And rising all arow, four springs abroad  
This way and that their shining water sent.  
And on both sides fair-flowering meads were set,  
Soft-clad with parsley and with violet.  
Even an immortal, if he came, that sight  
Marvelling might view and joy thereof might get.

Here again are the halls and gardens of Alcinoüs in the pleasant land of Phæacia:—

Withindoors fifty serving-women sit:  
Some turn the mill and grind bright corn in it;  
And others weave at looms or twist the yarn,  
While, like the leaves of a tall poplar, flit

The glancing shuttles through their finger-tips,  
As from the warp-threads down the thin oil drips;  
For far as the Phæacians pass all men  
In skill to sweep the sea in racing ships,

So far their women in the weaver's art  
Excel all others, since to them apart  
Athena skill in lovely workmanship  
Has granted, and an understanding heart.

Without the courtyard of the house of state  
An orchard of four acres nigh the gate  
Is planted, with a fence all round it drawn;  
And there grow fruit-trees flourishing and great:

Pear-trees and pomegranates, and apple-trees  
Laden with shining apples, and by these,  
Sweet-juiced figs and olives burgeoning,  
Whose fruiting ceases not nor perishes

Winter or summer, all the year: for there  
The western breezes ever soft and fair  
Ripen one crop and bring another on.  
Apple on apple growing, pear on pear.

Grape-bunch on grape-bunch, fig on fig they lie  
Mellowing to age: and trenched deep thereby  
The many-fruited vineyard of the king  
Is set: one side of it lies warm and dry,

Where raisins in the heat of the sun are spread,  
And on one side they gather grapes, and tread  
The vintage in the wine-press: while in front  
The clusters newly set their blossom shed,

And midway some the first faint colour show.  
There likewise, by the vineyard's utmost row,  
Are set trim garden-beds of every sort,  
Full-flowering while the seasons come and go.

And there two springs gush forth, and of the two  
One is divided all the garden through,  
And one beneath the courtyard gateway runs  
Toward the high house: from it the townsfolk drew.

Evidently Mr. Mackail enjoys these descriptive passages, delighting to set the threads in his arras, which make the delicate landscape pattern of foliage, and fruit, and streams. But he is no less happy in the humanity of other parts of the story. The whole of the sixth book, perhaps the finest thing in Homer, with its fascinating picture of Nausicaa carrying her wainful of dirty clothes to the washing pool in the simple patriarchal life, is admirably done. The ripple of underlying humour is caught, and the *ethos* of the scene between the unkempt sea-marred castaway and the high-hearted daughter of a king. How extraordinarily modern it is:—

So saying, bright Odysseus from his bed  
Crept, and from off the bushy thicket shred  
A leafy bough to hide his nakedness,  
And like a lion on the mountains bred

Strode forth, that, in his might of none in awe,  
With eyes afire, through rain and gusty flaw  
Goes hunting after the wild woodland deer,  
Or sheep or oxen; for his hungry maw

Even the fenced yard where the flocks are pent  
Bids him adventure: So Odysseus went  
Among the fair-tressed maids to cast himself,  
Though naked: for his need was imminent.

Dreadful to them the sea-stained man drew nigh:  
And up and down they ran dispersedly  
Along the jutting beaches: only then  
The daughter of Alcinoüs did not fly:

Such courage put Athena in her breast:  
Unfaltering she stood up and undistressed,  
And faced him: and Odysseus held debate,  
Whether to clasp her knees in prayer were best.

Or where he stood with supplicating speech  
From far away her mercy to beseech:  
Till thus debating best he thought from far  
The lovely maiden with soft words to reach.

Mr. Mackail's diction strikes us again and again as curiously and exactly right. In the main straightforward and transparent, it has just the faint touch of archaism

which, without ever becoming an affectation or a mannerism, is needed to preserve the atmosphere of a fairy-tale which hangs all about the "Odyssey." His rhythm also runs very delicately. And of course he deserves the very highest praise for the insight which discovered the adaptability of the Fitzgerald quatrain to the purposes of continuous narrative and for the fine sense of metre which enabled him to carry out the adaptation. To preserve the interest of the rhyme-arrangement and at the same time to break down the barriers between quatrain and quatrain so as to make them not independent units, but merely, as it were, single waves in the flow of a tide, required some subtlety. Mr. Mackail has accomplished it by the skilful use of what technical metrists call "light endings" and "unstopped lines" at the close of his quatrains, and to our mind with a remarkable success.

### An Unconventional Handbook.

THE AGE OF SHAKESPEARE (1579-1631). By Thomas Seccombe and J. W. Allen. (Bell.)

THIS is the age of handbooks, of little guides, of manuals, of text-books, in all of which well-equipped scholars will intrepidly boil you down an age and offer you its intellectual quintessence in three or four hundred neatly packed pages. It is said by the faculty that meat extract will keep no one alive, but the convenience of the handbook as a stimulant to weak literary digestions is not to be gainsaid. Here, in "The Age of Shakespeare," Messrs. Seccombe and Allen have prepared an admirable critical digest of the leading and minor Elizabethan poets, critics, novelists, satirists, controversialists, historians, travellers, and a conspectus of the Elizabethan drama. The amount of research required, of miscellaneous reading, of checking of facts and figures, of comparison of bibliographical details, of acquaintance with the latest researches of modern scholarship, not to speak of the actual critical judgments delivered on the chief works of over a hundred authors, all this is so formidable a labour that one scarcely expects to find, in a literary handbook, a fresh and piquant style of literary judgments in addition to soundness of scholarship. Most text-books, in fact, are dry and sapless because their learned authors have been over-burdened by the prodigious accumulation of literary facts they have been forced to sift and classify, and their works consequently breathe back to us the exhausted air of lecture rooms and museums. Whether Messrs. Seccombe and Allen are scholars with special recuperative powers, or whether it be that "the spacious times of great Elizabeth" have quickened their vital spirits and purged them of drowsy humours, we know not, but "The Age of Shakespeare" is fresh and unconventional in its brisk outlook and shows not a trace of pedantry in its critical dicta. The book's aim is to give us a quick but comprehensive view of the main body of Elizabethan literature and to assess its documentary and æsthetic value in a running critical commentary, and in both these respects "The Age of Shakespeare" is an achievement quite out of the common. We cannot, indeed, believe that the authors have deliberately read through all the literature they pass in review—they are far too intelligent for that; but they have evidently the faculty of getting at the pith and marrow of a book without waste of time, and have fruitful memories of the salient features of the folios and quartos they have browsed amongst. Of course, the critical dicta the joint authors deliver themselves of are often matters of taste. But the majority of literary judgments in the book are distinguished by an effective boldness in expression which seems to us far preferable to the attitude of so many critics who fear to speak their own minds lest they be thought not to be "judicial." The great advantage of a critic's boldly speaking out his mind is that the question

*sub judice* is much more likely to be exposed in all aspects by the conflict of opinions generated in the reader's mind than by any mere cautious summary. The following passage on Bacon is an illustration in point:—

Bacon completed his services on behalf of the Crown against his old patron by penning an official declaration of the treason of Essex, 1601. Three years later he drew up a palinode, or an apology, for his behaviour with regard to the noble but unfortunate Earl, in whose interests, he now declared, he had neglected the Queen's service, and his own fortune. The whole incident illustrates but too plainly Bacon's extraordinary power of interested self-persuasion and his faculty for concentrating his attention less upon his actual deeds and utterances than upon the general rectitude of his intentions. He was paid £1,200 for his efforts in proving his friend a traitor, but he failed to secure the Mastership of the Rolls, or other definite preferment.

The essays are representative throughout of Bacon's shrewd and sententious humour, his almost incomparable power of generalizing and of crystallizing the utterances of sage men of all periods. Their author was, in very truth, "a discloser of lights the most overwhelming in flashes of wit." Yet Bacon's gift for transmitting his personality is so great that they reveal with equal distinctness his too clear apprehension of the base side of human nature, his poverty in respect of genial humours, emotion and the higher imaginative qualities, his total lack of what Milton describes as the three prime elements of poetry—the simple, the sensuous, and the passionate.

Now this is excellent criticism. It is of course open to the counsel for the defence to say that Bacon's motives were intellectually loftier than our authors have construed them, but the passage cited has the great merit of throwing the onus on the adversary of proving that the quality of Bacon's intellect can be divorced from the quality of his moral character. This being impossible, the critic will have to go afresh to the essays for evidence that Bacon was not lacking in the higher imaginative qualities, and genial humour and emotion. For ourselves, we are in agreement with our authors, and hold that their analysis of Bacon's mental characteristics is very near the mark.

The general criticism advanced on the minor Elizabethan dramatists is also refreshingly to the point. The authors point out that Lamb, who wrote with the enthusiasm of a lover and a discoverer, was "merely the instrument of the romantic movement in literature." The eulogies of Lamb, enthusiastically expanded by Mr. Swinburne, have been echoed by a crowd of lesser critics. The lyrical school of criticism has almost exhausted the language of eulogy in the Elizabethans praise:—

No one nowadays would deny that, even putting aside Shakespeare and Jonson, the later Elizabethan or strictly Jacobean drama is remarkable for its variety and its strength. It has the splendid vitality, the joy and carelessness, the freedom and audacity and idealism of youth. It is strewn with jewels of imagination, it is full of the mystery and horror of unrestrained passion. There is something in it for all tastes; brilliant or striking character, sketches and pictures of manner, wide reaching thought, piercing aphorism, lyrical flights, cynicism, rhetoric passion, farce.

But it is a drama of passages, of passionate or joyous moments, of inspirational flashes. It is amazingly unequal, crude, careless, and wayward. Putting Shakespeare and Ben Jonson aside, we doubt if there be a single play of any serious pretensions which is not disfigured by faults so gross as to be almost damning. We must not allow ourselves to be blinded by its scattered excellences to its fundamental defects, or to be hypnotised by the chorus of praise which has arisen from its later critics. . . . Shakespeare's creative power combines incongruous elements; in the minor dramatists these elements mix. . . . The foundations of drama must be laid deep in human nature; for drama is the interaction of character. . . . But in the minor Elizabethan dramatists without exception, in Beaumont, Fletcher, Webster, Middleton, Tourneur, Ford, Chapman, Dekker, the power of characterization is small.

Their work is too grossly disfigured and too lacking in essentials ever to be more than the playground of a few scholars, the pleasure of a few adepts.



We should prefer to phrase the last criticism thus: their work was too lacking in the essentials of great art to last: for nothing can last except really great or most exquisite art. Eighteenth century society required a drama reflecting its own moods, conventions and worldly outlook, and that drama is now a dead letter. So with the novels of our own day: only a few great pieces will survive. "Coherence and reality in drama" would not, as our authors in one passage seem to imply, have saved the Elizabethan drama. Middleton's "A Chaste Maid in Cheapside" has reality and coherence enough, but is deficient in those essentials that only great genius can give. Messrs. Seccombe and Allen, however, sum up their argument with a frank force that wins our respect: "The eighteenth century was not so far wrong. It is a case of Shakespeare first, Ben Jonson a bad second, and the rest nowhere."

The eighty-four pages of Volume II. devoted to Shakespeare are a masterly *précis* of the whole subject. The amount of biographical information, Shakespeariana, critical notes on Shakespeare's editors, and Shakespearian problems comprised in this section, is quite astonishing, and we should like to see this portion of the book issued separately in cheap form, and used as a text book for colleges. The criticisms of the plays are fresh and stimulating, and the authors are not afraid of being a little uncompromising at times. Of course, the finest shades of æsthetic criticism are not to be found, but only a criticism of outlines and details, and naturally the authors succeed better with the plays of Shakespeare's early period than with the great tragedies. However, there is more sound original criticism contained in the eighty-four pages than in many more pretentious works.

### With the Best of Intentions.

THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH: ITS RISE AND PROGRESS AND A SKETCH OF ITS WORK. By Edward T. Bennett. (Brimley Johnson. 1s.)

As a sign of our times, a bye product, an epiphenomenon, the S. P. R. is easy prey, no doubt, for those who can compel laughter at will, but the Society possesses an interest of its own, for it has no predecessors in history, and, in a scientific age, it boldly claims, by scientific methods, to prove the existence of that which science either denies, or of which, shrugging her shoulders, she says, "Nescio." We may outline, therefore, its rise and continuance, if not, as our title-page says, its "rise and progress."

The Society has recently attained its majority, its active founder having been Prof. Barrett, of Dublin, and its first President the late Prof. Sidgwick, of Cambridge. Subsequent Presidents furnish a most interesting list of names: Prof. Balfour Stewart, a distinguished physicist; Mr. Balfour, Prof. William James, Sir William Crookes, Mr. Fred. W. H. Myers, and Sir Oliver Lodge. Upon which list we would make only these comments, that Prof. James alone can claim any acquaintance with nervous physiology and its branch psychology, that he must have been greatly interested by the fascinating psychological studies which the members of the Society afforded, and that none of these gentlemen had or has studied morbid mental phenomena. They have, so to speak, attempted a commentary upon Shakespeare before learning to read or to see. That by the way.

As to this matter of progress, says Mr. Bennett, "The attitude of the public mind towards Psychical Research has so changed during the twenty years that it is difficult now to realise the feelings of contempt which were almost universal among educated people, in regard to some branches of the enquiry." We had not noticed this change, nor can we conceive how it could have been effected; but the public attitude to any scientific work matters little if work has been done. What, then, is the

Society's record of achievement? First, as to its own account. These are its claims:—

- (1.) That proof is afforded that there are other means than the "five senses" by which knowledge can be acquired by the human mind; in other words, that Telepathy is a Fact.
- (2.) That one human mind has the power of influencing other human minds in ways not heretofore recognised by science; in other words, that the effects of Suggestion, Hypnotism, and Psychic Healing represent groups of actual Phenomena.
- (3.) That there is a realm of undeveloped and unrecognised Faculty in Man, provisionally termed the Subliminal Self.
- (4.) That there is a basis of fact in many stories of Hauntings and Apparitions of various kinds.
- (5.) That in Psychical Research the enquirer does meet with Intelligences other than human beings in the flesh. And that there is evidence—small though it be in amount—which is sufficient to prove the Continuity of individual life after death, and that communication does take place between those in this and in another condition of life.

Now these are great claims. The last is stupendous. All are profoundly important. What, then, is the verdict of the scientific world, which has been wise enough to begin at the beginning, upon those who claim to be their co-workers in this field? That "Telepathy is a Fact" is denied by those competent to judge. Suggestion, hypnotism and psychic healing are commonplaces. They were not discovered by the Society, nor has its work added to our knowledge of them. The discussion of psychic healing in this volume is not only puerile and worthy of the advertisements in a Transatlantic journal, but much worse. We must make a quotation, which, if generally credited, would cost countless lives and hours of misery:—

An attempt has been made to draw a line between nervous cases, or cases due more or less to the imagination, [a most ignorant comment] and actual physical or organic cases. It has been alleged that only the former class are amenable to psychic treatment. But experience does not justify this conclusion. Physical and organic effects, even diseases, can be caused simply by mental impression. It seems, therefore, unreasonable to reject the idea that mental treatment may be efficacious as a remedial agent, not only in nervous disorders and in what may be called imaginary ailments, but also in cases of organic disease, even in cases which, under ordinary circumstances, require surgical treatment.

This is beneath comment. To the third proposition, vague and obvious, everyone would assent, as to more important platitudes; whilst no one's belief or disbelief in the remaining clauses could be affected by anything we might say here, or the S. P. R. might say or do elsewhere. Pity 'tis that people who seek reality of one sort or another, do not as certainly find what they wish to find as our well-intentioned friends of the S. P. R.

We are aware that our remarks must cause pain to many people whose aims and motives are beyond praise. But we nevertheless feel it necessary to record the conviction, based on some considerable experience of the "phenomena" which concern the Society, that its existence is a necessary evil, fortunately ephemeral, at which we need not cavil. In this early age of science it was inevitable that such a quasi-scientific body should be formed. But we believe its influence to make for the efflorescence of superstition, for the blasting of many hopes, and for the discredit of many things which we, like the S. P. R., hold to be truth, and its credulous and exploded expositions of which we therefore the more deeply deplore.

### Real Country.

THINGS ABOUT OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD. By Mémie Muriel Dowie. (Richards. 6s.)

THESE four and thirty chapters make up a book which is neither dull nor gaudy, neither foolish nor perverse. It is a book written quite clearly by one born, as Miss Dowie puts it, to "the freedom of the country"—a phrase which means a great deal. For it is a freedom which may by no means be

purchased with a country estate; as often as not the true freedom is found in the cottage tumbling to insanitary decay outside the lodge-gates. "To work faithfully with and for Nature," says Miss Dowie, "should leave one both strong and humble; that I am conscious of my limitations may therefore be believed. But in my love I am strong, and so to all fellow-lovers of plants, trees, and beasts I offer hopefully what is, inside its thin envelope of fiction, my Country Book." No reader is likely to be disappointed with a volume so full of acuteness, humour, knowledge, and friendly charm.

Miss Dowie gives us the round of country life both in its human and natural aspects; some of the character sketches, slight though they are, are excellently touched in; the Countess, and the Admiral, and the Martindales are all very much alive, particularly the Admiral. The chapter called "An Old Labourer," too, is full of quiet observation. There are not many men left who have old Christian's firm love for the soil and knowledge of its ways, just as there are very few men left who can do sound and honest spade-work. The art of digging, as anyone with experience knows, is almost a lost art. Yet the land responds to honest spade culture with a kind of understanding gladness.

The humours of poultry-rearing, and cow-keeping, and pig-raising are treated by Miss Dowie with exhilarating freshness; not many people are born with the selective instinct, it has generally to be acquired at the expense of both spirit and pocket. Incubators are well enough when you get the right one and know how to use it, and pig-raising is all right when you have got over the initial obstacles. Betty, fortunately, had a genius for acquiring knowledge through humorous failure, and in the end her ventures were justified. Betty is an altogether charming little person, whom we cheerfully forgive for her slangy tendencies.

Miss Dowie's style in this volume is frankly colloquial, but occasionally it fits itself to a deeper theme. Here is a delicately felt passage concerning an aspect of autumn:—

Nature may be sad—Man must revel. It is Man's moment: he is face to face with what he has made; potent; beneath his foot is the bared earth, in his hand the increase he has compelled from her. It is not in spring, summer, or winter that the peasant dances—it is in autumn. It is in autumn he gets the crick out of his back, and stands erect to look over the wide fields. There where the pale reek rises from the little dung-heaps on the stubble, there where the blue smoke draws along the ground from the rubbish fires on the fallow, and quaint Belgian cows marbled in black and white, crop soothly after the fourth cutting of alfalfa—there, in those fields, Man has won his battle, he has come into his own.

A great deal of practical value may be learnt from these engaging pages, though it must always be remembered that what suits one county may not suit another, and also that individual idiosyncrasy is a powerful factor in the raising of fruit and flowers. Given what appear to be exactly similar soil and conditions, and with the same seeds or cuttings, two people may obtain very different results. It is the loving hand that in some unaccountable way induces the response of growth. We particularly commend to readers what Miss Dowie has to say on the apparently uninspiring subject of potatoes.

One of the chapters, "A Sporting Girl to Her Hunter," is in verse—swinging, vigorous verse, too. But we like better the verses in a later paper called "The Moon-Dogs." We quote two stanzas:—

On the moors in Moen-land,  
The dead dogs range,  
Where the bracken's always ruddy  
And the seasons never change;  
Where the gorse has ne'er a prickle,  
And the Moon-heather's sweet,  
And they gallop all the year through  
And never hurt their feet.

• • • • •

For when we're growing weary,  
And our days down here run low;  
When our eyes are rather bleary,  
And our paws are stiff and slow;  
We can see Them tireless, running,  
We can dream Their sweet repose,  
In a sandy warm Moon-burrow  
With a feather on Their nose.

For these delightful verses all true dog lovers will be indebted to Miss Dowie. We have not, for some time, come across a volume so bright and sound and free from sentimentality.

### A Japanese Story.

FOR HIS PEOPLE. By Viscount Hayashi. (Harpers. 5s.)

WE have seen much of Japan during recent years through European eyes, from the cynically amorous "Madame Chrysanthème" of Pierre Loti, to the notes of the latest tourist who has scampered over the beaten track. But these give us not the slightest glimpse into the soul of a people mainly made up of toiling peasantry, with legends, stories, feeling, ideals of their own. Viscount Hayashi is the Japanese Ambassador to the Court of St. James's. He has rightly regarded his functions as including the establishment of some sort of understanding between the people of Japan and the people of Great Britain, and to that end—if we may impute an obvious motive—he has rendered into English, simple and vivid English, the story of Sogoro and his great sacrifice, a story which is attested by official documents, and for two centuries and a half has been an inspiration to Japan. The story, which the Japanese call "The Cherry Blossoms of a Spring Morn," has been dramatised, it is known throughout the country, and the tomb of Sogoro is an honoured shrine. But for the English reader the interest lies in the curious revelations of Japanese life and thought in the days when a Stuart still sat on the English throne. Like all stories that reach the heart of a people, the story of Sogoro is simple. About forty miles east of the capital, which was then called Yedo, stood, and still stands, the hamlet of Kodzu. Here, two hundred and fifty years ago, the peasants were terribly oppressed by Sugiyama, the dishonest steward of the Baron Hotta, feudal lord of the province. No access could be obtained to the absentee lord; and as a last resource it was determined by the villagers to present a petition to the Shogun. Now the Shogun always acted on a petition, with good reason; for the petitioner's penalty was death, and it was not likely that the penalty would be faced without serious cause. As headman of the village Sogoro claimed his right to sacrifice himself. And the story is mainly of Sogoro's preparations and his journey to the capital. Before he started, remembering that his wife and children might be involved in his punishment, he thus addressed his wife; and under the formality of the scene one finds humanity:—

"Accordingly I am prepared, my dear Tsuta, to dissolve our marriage tie, by giving to you in writing a formal divorce. But think not that this act of mine implies any diminution of affectionate regard for you and our little ones, for it is, in truth, a proof to the contrary."

Sogoro, with these words, placed on his wife's lap the document he alluded to, and which, by a set phraseology and close adherence to a time-honoured method of framing it, has come to be generally spoken of as a "three-lines-and-a-half" letter.

Tsuta started as though stabbed to the heart at this new phase of calamity, and it seemed to be the culminating point of her many sorrows. But she rose to the occasion, and, in a tone of remonstrance, said:—

"It is absolutely cruel of you to pretend that in me you have a wife who would cling despicably to mere existence after witnessing her husband's noble sacrifice of his own life for others' good. Do you forget that I am the daughter of Kin-bi Soyemon?"



Sogoro departed for Yedo with his petition; hid himself under the bridge over which the Shogun must pass, and at the right moment, thrust the document, held in a cleft bamboo, within the screened window of the palanquin:—

The Shogun, who was in no way disturbed, quietly grasped the folded paper, and nodded in a kindly way to the bold petitioner, who caught the glance, and felt that his mission had been fulfilled. Prostrating himself instantly, with his forehead to the boards of the bridge, in token of profound respect, Sogoro allowed himself to be bound, with his arms at his back, and was immediately carried off to prison.

Sogoro was executed, as were his wife and children; but he had accomplished his purpose, and on the tomb of the man who died for his people fresh flowers are still laid. The unjust steward and his accomplices voluntarily committed "seppuku," falling upon their swords whilst their best friends stood by in readiness to decapitate them, and so end their sufferings. And the ghosts of Sogoro and his family still haunted the Baron Hotta. It is a simple story of self-sacrifice such as is common to East and West; but the charm lies in the quaint mixture of simplicity, courtesy, and cruelty of which the details are composed.

### A Cheerful War-Book.

THE LAND OF THE BOXERS. By Captain Gordon Casserly. With 15 Illustrations and a Plan. (Longmans. 10s. 6d. net.)

As an officer in the Indian Army, Captain Gordon Casserly took part in the recent military action in China of the Allied Powers, and now he publishes his reflections on that highly important campaign. The book bears traces of hasty production. Perhaps it was hurriedly put together in the belief that an association of England with Germany in the matter of the Bagdad Railway would lead to trouble between England and Russia. That prospect has been dimmed by a statement from the Prime Minister; but Mars, in his course amid the constellations, has been favourable to Captain Casserly. Recent events in relation to Manchuria were ominous. Russia has disowned the designs which a fortnight ago raised a scare throughout Europe and the United States; but those who are acquainted with her methods of policy will not be surprised if ere long the crisis again arises, and that in earnest. What then? We have only to recall the terms of our Alliance with Japan in order to perceive that the situation will be grave. In the event of either Ally finding itself at war in the Far East with a single Power, the other is to be neutral, and to endeavour to impose general neutrality; but should the enemy be not single-handed the other Ally is to take the field, and the seas as well. It is not impossible that this contingency may become actual. The interests in vindication of which Japan went to war with China lie largely in Manchuria, and they are incompatible with the well-known though dissembled ambitions of Russia. Sooner or later, then, it seems clear, there must be war between the Tsar and the Mikado. It is doubtful whether Russia would have found help had she not withdrawn the demands which, if we may judge from the statements by Lord Lansdowne and Lord Cranbourne, she undoubtedly, in some tentative manner, made last month. There are two strong influences making for the dissolution of her alliance with France, the only Power from whom succour could be expected. France having paused in the increase of her Navy, the relations between St. Petersburg and Paris are already cold; and, from causes which cannot with propriety be discussed at present, France and England are arriving at friendly understanding.

Still, even apart from our Treaty of Alliance with Japan, it is difficult to perceive how England could have remained neutral had war over Manchuria been declared. She, too,

has interests in that vast region, and she could not have left them in neglect. She could not have stood non-combatant between Russia and Japan as the humble Kaffirs stood while Boers and Britons were between them making South Africa a waste. Thus, it is with keen concern that we read what Captain Casserly has to tell about the troops of the various Powers that joined in the subjugation of the Boxers. His disclosures are reassuring. It was only when they came into contact with detachments of our Army that the soldiery of the Great Powers got over a general contempt for the military forces of England.

### The Misterie of Pewter.

HISTORY OF THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF PEWTERERS OF THE CITY OF LONDON, BASED UPON THEIR OWN RECORDS. By Charles Welch. 2 Vols. (Blades, East and Blades.)

THE first and obvious thing that strikes the reader taking up these volumes is the beauty of their type and illustrations. We have never seen finer reproductions in colour of old illuminated charters and documents. The next thing that comes home is the continuity of pewter in London's history. Down all the crowded centuries since 1348, this industrial thread is visible through the dense fabric of English life. Men have changed their clothes and their religion, but the honest pewter has kept its state in Rome. The pewterers, worthy men, have from the thirteenth year of Edward IV. been a recognised and chartered band of men, intent on making "pots, salt-cellars, equelettes, platters, and other things by good folks bespoken." They never had a motto of their own, but cheerfully shared the Brewers': "In God is all my Trust." We did not know that the alliance between beer and pewter was so absolute.

All the usual burdens of taxation, whether in money or blood, which fell on the old City companies were endured by the Pewterers. A store of armour was kept in the Hall in Lime Street for war service, and an armourer was employed to keep it in condition. The settling of internal disputes and the correction of misdemeanours occupied much time and produced many hundreds of records. That the Elizabethan pewterers contended with something of the vigour of men used to the hammer may be gathered from the rule made in 1558 that—

no parson of the sayde fellowship shall interrupt one another in telling of his tale before the maister and wardens setting in their Courtes, or presume to speak in another man's tale till he hath tolde his tale to an end.

Sometimes a quarrel was too hot and serious to be settled domestically. Thus, in 1562 one Robert West complained bitterly of a man who had openly slandered him in Westminster Palace, pointing him out to the bystanders as a "false maker of measuer pottes; for where they should be a quart he makith them a pynt and a half, and goith abowt to deceyve you of yo<sup>r</sup> drink." Both men appeared before the wardens, and it was resolved to refer their dispute to trial before the Lord Mayor. A more excellent way was adopted in a quarrel which temporarily disturbed the relations between Thomas Wansworth and John Boulting in 1572. They were ordered to invite each other to dinner, each invitation to include the guest's wife:—

not omyttinge therein there good mother-in-lawe, and so to contynue thencfurthe lovers.

Here and there in the records the eye alights on the awful moment when "Othello's occupation's gone"—when a pewterer ceased, for his sins, to be a pewterer. One sentence runs: "Wherefore the sayde Ellis ys quyte dismissed for occupying in the crafte of pewterers for ever."

On every page of these records some curious fact or word leaps to light. Thus in a seventeenth century list of vessels made in pewter we find such objects as children's beak<sup>ns</sup>, greate duble bells, greate sawcers, cawdle potts, longe hooped Winchester pints, and Great Coffin saultes. Very striking, too, is the unbroken list of masters and wardens of the company from 1450 to 1902. Chronological sequence, indeed, is the note of the book. Mr. Welch has been supplied so abundantly with material that he has found it best to arrange it in order of date, with a minimum of comment. Nor has he been able, within the space at his disposal, to bring his story up to a later date than 1760, in which year occurs the first mention of punch bowls. But the Pewterers can now see themselves as in a mirror of polished pewter.

## Other New Books.

THE CHATELAINE OF VERGI. Translated by Alice Kemp-Welch. (Nutt. 2s. net.)

A PROSE version of the familiar thirteenth century romance, with an introduction by M. Brandin. M. Brandin writes: "At the Court of the Dukes of Burgundy, as well as that of the Count of Flanders, and amongst the *entourage* of Queen Margaret of Navarre, the dainty story of the Chatelaine of Vergi caused many tears to be shed. It made the hearts of many lords and ladies beat, and excited the pity of many a poet." The story has been referred to and used by many writers, from Froissart to M. Gaston Raynaud, whose text is reproduced at the end of this volume. The origin of the story is not of much importance, though we think that M. Brandin's reasons for rejecting M. Raynaud's theory that it deals with the scandal in which Hugo IV., Beatrice of Champagne and Laura of Lorraine are not sufficiently conclusive. However, the story is the thing, and a graceful and touching story it is. It tells of how a certain knight loved the Lady of Vergi, who made it a condition that if he should ever discover their love to another, that love should cease. Then comes in the lady of the Duke "who ruled in Burgundy," with a plot to ruin the Knight who declined her advances. The catastrophe is quite simple and, in the spirit of the time, inevitable. The ending in this English rendering is thus summed up:—

Ah, God! All the distress and trouble of the Knight came to him because he so mischanced as to make known that which he ought to have kept secret, and which his Love had forbidden him to speak of so long as he would have her love.

Miss Kemp-Welch's version is on the whole poetical and simple; she does not strive too assiduously after effect, though now and then she falls into rather unhappy phrases. But we are glad to have so pleasant a translation of so delightful a story.

THE LAST DAYS OF GREAT MEN: CROMWELL, NAPOLEON, MAHOMET. By W. Quartermaine East. (Sampson Low. 6s. net.)

MR. EAST has at least the virtue of modesty. He does not claim to have made any new discoveries concerning these three great men, he merely claims that his studies are "inspired by a genuine love of their subject, and though falling far short of what the writer could desire, may yet throw fresh light on the lives and characters of these remarkable men." Mr. East is a frank hero worshipper, with the hero worshipper's limitations. The main object of his essay on Cromwell is to prove Cromwell's sincerity as a Christian: a question too metaphysical for proof at

this time of day. The author's general attitude in the matter of the Civil War may be judged by this comment concerning Charles I.'s execution: "An act of justice had to be done, the feelings of an outraged nation had to be liquidated." We have never been able to discover how the feelings of an outraged nation were "liquidated" by that piece of unnecessary folly: the nation, indeed, was very little concerned in it. We cannot enter fully into Mr. East's estimate of Napoleon and Mahomet; his enthusiasm we respect, his conclusions, to say the least, are open to grave dispute. But the volume has distinct interest, though it has not much literary distinction. There is included in it a translation of the Diary of Napoleon's Journey from Smorgoni to Paris.

IN THE LAND OF THE BLACK MOUNTAIN. By R. Wyon and C. Prance. (Methuen.)

A QUARTER of a century ago the travellers who had visited Montenegro might have been counted on the fingers, and though nowadays Montenegro is becoming better known, it is too far off and too difficult of access to be really one of the holiday places of Europe. Messrs. Wyon and Prance did not content themselves with merely visiting the capital, Cettigne, but penetrated into the mountains, to Kolashin, Moraca, Ostrog, and Niksic, where the old life of these primitive mountaineers is to be seen in all its simplicity. Like most men who go to Montenegro, but do not push on to the interior of Albania, the writers became thoroughly Slav in their sympathies, and look at all questions with Montenegrin eyes. But that the Montenegrins are not exactly easy neighbours to get on with may be judged from the following conversation which took place when the travellers visited the prison in Cettigne. Mr. Wyon asked what most of the prisoners had done, and received the reply: "Oh, they have mostly quarrelled among themselves. They are not criminals. We have very few thieves and robbers in Montenegro. This youth," went on our informant, pointing to a young man with a pleasant face, and (sic) who grinned with joy as he noticed the attention with which we favoured him, "has a ten years' sentence for quarrelling." "But quarrelling," we repeated, "is it punishable to quarrel?" "Yes, too many lives are lost," was the laconic reply. "Oh," we exclaimed, a light breaking in upon us, "you mean murder. They are all murderers?" "We have no murderers," came the indignant response. "Our land is as safe from murder as any other in the world. No one kills to rob or steal in Montenegro. But we just quarrel among ourselves. We are hot-blooded, and shoot quickly, that is all." The book is capitally illustrated with photographs taken by the authors.

A useful little pamphlet reaches us from Messrs. Limpus Baker called "The Fraud of the Label." The object of the publication needs no explanation; it simply warns buyers against the substitution by dishonest tradesmen of inferior goods for those which are asked for. The imitation of labels by unscrupulous manufacturers has long been a grievance with which the law does not yet adequately deal.

The third and fourth volumes of the "Woman's Library" (Chapman and Hall) consist of "Nursery and Sick Room" and "Some Arts and Crafts." In the former the "Ethical Training of Children" is discussed by Lady Isabel Margesson, while the "Practical Care of Children" and "Nursing in and out of Hospital" are dealt with by Dr. Ethel Lamport and Miss H. F. Gethen. The subjects are treated practically and clearly. "Some Arts and Crafts" contains six sections, each treated by a different writer.



## Fiction.

## Mr. Moore's Ireland.

THE UNTILLED FIELD. By George Moore. (Unwin. 6s.)

IRELAND, as seen by Mr. George Moore, is, it seems to us, not so much an "untilled field" as a field incapable of crop on account of the huge weight of ecclesiastical masonry with which it is encumbered. That impression of a people "who live in a dreamy submissiveness," which we recorded in reviewing (2 August 1902) this volume in Irish containing six of the tales in the present publication, is only enhanced by reading Mr. Moore at greater length in our own tongue. Against this submissiveness we have the logic of facts driven home with calm force, if we may speak of driving in connection with a book that is for the most part *drawn*. The facts we get are, that the priest is a killjoy in Ireland, a menace to a meagre population, and an absorber to a startling degree of the industry and wealth of the land. In the end our ears are full of two priests arguing that "bad statues were more likely to excite devotional feelings than good ones, bad statues being further removed from perilous Nature," while our eyes are riveted on three Irishmen—"one seeking a country with a future, one seeking a country with a past, and one thinking of going back to a country without past or future."

The book, as now rounded off, considerably strengthens our regard for Mr. Moore as a creative artist. It is so frankly and unlaboriously Irish that it should pass as a genuine product of the soil. The stories are nearly all memorable, though perhaps none is quite so good as the story of Biddy and the church-window, from which we have already quoted. Our quotation, compared with the corresponding passage on page 103 of Mr. Unwin's volume, shows that Mr. Moore has been as busy as usual in recasting his thought. Formerly, if Mr. O'Sullivan (from whom we translated) was to be trusted, the "chickens" broke in anonymously upon Biddy's meditations about her Virgin's cloaks. The chickens are now Minorcas, Buff Orpingtons, and Plymouth Rocks! "Let knowledge grow from more to more."

Perhaps the best of the new stories is "A Play-House in the Waste." Here the priest, against whom, as an individual, Mr. Moore displays little or no animus, has had an inspiration for the enlivening of his peasant flock. "The prettiest girl in all the parish was to play Good Deeds." It was a parish of hovels with green water in front of each, and the bailiff for bogie-man. Its one bastard had been strangled by the indignant grandmother: it was not a place likely to develop Mænads on the strength of a mystery-play. But a storm came and punished the fabric of the theatre before any performance had been given in it, and the priest, half seeing the hand of God in the accident, discontinued his enterprise, and knitted to pass the time, because "there wasn't a woman in the parish that could turn a heel properly," and because "if one is absorbed in a book, one experiences a certain reluctance in putting it aside."

There is less in "The Untilled Field" of that sagacious sensuality which has heretofore given a rather waxen complexion to Mr. Moore's art. One meets it here, it is true, in a certain chilly isolation, as of the leg on a Manx coat of arms (if we may borrow a simile from Robert Buchanan), but the book presents several women with sympathy, and one even with spiritual admiration. The priest-ridden woman of fortune, whose religious instinct separates her from her husband, whom she at once loves and emancipates, is a touching embodiment of an ideal which every really selfish man of brains creates when he is fast asleep. But there must be no suspicion

of satire in our concluding sentence, which recommends all who have a taste for the significant in literary art to read Mr. Moore's admirable volume.

PARK LANE. By Percy White. (Constable. 6s.)

SEMI-SOCIETY. By Frank Richardson. (Chatto and Windus. 6s.)

MR. PERCY WHITE and Mr. Frank Richardson belong to that class of novelists best described by the epithet Entertaining. They write stories that the lazy man may take up after dinner, and finish by midnight, conscious as he lights his candle that he has spent a pleasant, self-forgetful evening, and made the acquaintance of certain men and women, amusing enough, and about as near to his own life as the strangers he meets in a railway carriage. We have no intention of decrying such novels. We read them, we enjoy them, and we are well aware that a deal of intelligence and observation go to the making of them, as well as that mixture of humour and cynicism that the man of the world acquires in his journey through life. But what has criticism to say to such books, except that they are entertaining and readable, and quite near enough to human nature to be credible.

Of these two amusement providers Mr. Richardson is the fresher: his characters are bitten a little more deeply into the plate, and the action of his story is brisker. Compared with "Mr. Bailey-Martin" and "The West-End," Mr. White's new story flags just a little. The elderly bachelor, "a quiet man, successful rather as a philosophic listener than an amusing talker," who tells the story, is a little too much inclined to be prolix, and his digressions verge too near the commonplace; but it is a good enough yarn about a successful business man who merged into a company promoter, with a house in Park Lane; of a lady's maid who became Lady Oxley, and on that altitude behaved beautifully. But Mr. White must beware of dullness, the unpardonable sin of the novel of Entertainment.

Mr. Richardson's story of "Semi-Society" is never dull. It is melodramatic, often epigrammatic, occasionally witty, and not in the least edifying. In all the characters there are sparks of life, particularly in the Jew financier, and his pretty fairy-like wife who takes morphia to assuage the pangs of love aroused in her bosom by the hero, a masterful man, who at the beginning of the story has just emerged from prison. This man, Vincent Skrene, is no ordinary gaol-bird: essentially he is the Ouidaesque hero, reincarnated into a world of fashionable restaurants and mammon worship. Mr. Richardson has set out boldly, with considerable equipment, to amuse the idle hours of our busy days, and we see no reason why he should not find his journey pleasant and profitable. He knows well enough that problems and psychology are not his métier. Let him continue to be entertaining, and we are quite agreeable that he should produce and multiply.

GEORGE GORING'S DAUGHTERS. By M. E. Carr. (Smith Elder. 6s.)

THIS is a singularly dull book. It is dull in its conception, and dull in the way it is carried out; indeed, it is difficult to see why anybody took the trouble to write so very many words without making sure first of having something to write about. The opening chapters are the least uninteresting in the book, for there is no reason why they should not lead to something later on; and if we quibble at the obvious influence of the Brontës in Miss Carr's descriptions of the two girls in their lonely moorland home, it is only because we have not gone far enough into the book to realize how much more readable it is when it reminds us of some one else's book than when it is only

like itself. The quotation from "Villette" on the title page—"Life is still life, whatever its pangs"—seems to promise a human drama of some sort, though this kind of quotation when torn from its context really does not mean very much; but the human drama, as played by three women and one man, never thrills us for an instant, and finally fizzles out in a sentimental effusion that lingers over many pages. There is one moment in the book when we expect an interesting development: it is when the sisters, having reached the age of twenty and twenty-two, go to school for the first time, and are thrown among ordinary schoolgirls who have had an ordinary up-bringing. But the situation, original though it is, is slurred over in a single chapter; and that chapter is as lifeless as the rest. If "George Goring's Daughters" could be judged as an immature work, we should say that it contained promise; for imitativeness is always a promising fault in a beginner, and the dullness that is produced by a conscientious avoidance of sensationalism is not wholly to be condemned in a young writer. But Miss Carr is not a beginner, and we suppose her work ranks as finished work. As such, we cannot possibly praise it.

HE FOR GOD ONLY. By Kathleen Caffyn. (Hurst and Blackett. 6s.)

THE title is somewhat obscure and suggests a novel of a sombre religious disposition. It turns out to be, on the contrary, if anything, a plea on the side of worldliness and a certain amount of earthly enjoyment. There is a good deal of idealism in the story. Human nature is rather played with for the purpose of accentuating its attractive and adaptable qualities. Circumstances also are freely twisted in order to heighten the picturesque side of the situations. In reading it is necessary to realize that neither the saints nor the sinners are the ordinary flesh and blood creatures of genuine existence. Those of real life are different—less persuasive—less effectual, as a rule, in fact, considerably less dramatic and convenient.

At the same time Mrs. Caffyn's new novel has distinct charm. In spite of the conviction that the authoress is playing fast and loose with the unfortunate limitations of personality, all her characters hold attention. More or less they all possess—except the saintly George—the elements of fascination. The impossible looking Rebecca, the delightful villain Jasper, the cynic Heron, and especially the ardent little creature Joan, seize a temporary attention. The book could be shortened with benefit, but even the minor character sketches are clearly outlined, and in the case of Mrs. Worrall suggest a faint suspicion of humour. The style is good, with a grace of phrasing and a discretion in the choice of adjectives, that makes it a welcome change from the average slipshod novel. Mrs. Caffyn's danger is a little tendency to affectation.

### Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the *Week's Fiction* are not necessarily final. Reviews of a selection will follow.]

THE MACHINATIONS OF JANET.

BY SARAH TYTLER.

A domestic novel. Janet was an orphan of humble origin, who unexpectedly came into a fortune. Her machinations consist of kindly endeavours to be useful to her less fortunate neighbours in spite of the embarrassments of her wealth. An unpretentious and carefully written story, distinguished by unusual simplicity of narration. (Long. 6s.)

HIS HEART'S DESIRE.

BY KATHERINE S. MACQUOID.

An historical romance. The scene is laid in France in the seventeenth century, and the central figure is Richelieu, whom we first meet as a young man taking part in a brilliant cavalcade at a Parisian riding school. "I believe," says the author in a prefatory note, "the evolution of Richelieu's character from early youth will be new to most readers." The book is dedicated to Mr. Weyman, "master in historical fiction." (Hodder and Stoughton. 6s.)

THE PINCH OF PROSPERITY.

BY HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL.

"A study of some twisted lives." The book presents strongly contrasted scenes of poverty and riches, and is intended to point the moral, "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them." The hero is a cadet of the house of Wyndquest, who, declining through unsuccessful authorship and journalism, is at length found selling matches on Waterloo Bridge. Then he becomes a famous novelist. The story appeared serially under the title of "The House of Quest." (Murray. 6s.)

THE FLAME AND THE FLOOD.

BY ROSAMOND LANGBRIDGE.

A new volume in "The First Novel Library." We first meet Susette in a theatre, where she makes the acquaintance of the musician. As he came on the stage "his presence was like a flame; its effulgence spread flickering over the sea of faces." And in the last chapter she is to choose between the love of this man, and the child of the man who is her husband. An ambitious study of passion in conflict with duty. The title comes from some lines by Mr. Yeats. (Unwin. 6s.)

THE GHOST.

BY MRS. CAMPBELL PRAED.

The story opens in the Australian Bush, and the plot turns on the authorship of a novel, the manuscript of which was presented to Adela by "a hanger-on at a shanty near the station," in the belief that she had inspired it. The scene changes to London, where Adela, hearing that the author has been "turned out of a public house to die of delirium tremens in the Bush," solves her pecuniary difficulties by publishing the novel as her own. Then in the plenitude of her success appears "The Ghost," with a claim upon the royalties. (Everett. 3s.6d.)

THE ABSURD REPENTANCE.

BY ST. JOHN LUCAS.

Another story about a novel and its author. The action passes in the Cotswolds, where we find a Bohemian artist, a curate, the lord of the manor, and the anonymous author, who, while on a walking tour, is detained in the village by a storm. The conversation of these young men is in the scintillating manner. Max confesses that he is wet,—"I am a male Niobe, a tear on the cheek of eternity . . . Take me away and wrap me tenderly in soft apparel,"—and he quotes the *Odyssey* in the original Greek. There is much of this, and some love. (Arnold. 6s.)

THE PAVILIONS OF LOVE.

BY MILDRED SHENSTONE.

A curious and rather formless story alternating between love and the supernatural. In the Prologue we make the acquaintance of two young men at Rackstraw Court who had been friends at Oxford. "'My mother has become an Esoteric Buddhist,' said Jack savagely. 'I told you that matters on this plane no longer affect her!'"—and the rest is a series of romantic adventures ending on a note of tragedy. (Arnold. 6s.)

We have also received "A Girl Soldier" by Kathleen P. Emmett (White) and "William de Winton" by Rev. A. Charles Highton (Drane).



## THE ACADEMY.

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## Ancient Tragedy in English Verse.

QUITE recently Sir Charles Dilke, in the course of a speech, referred to the persistent influence of Greek thought upon modern civilisation. In some respects, however, we appear to be always and hopelessly antagonistic to the Greek conception of life. "Few things in the history of speculation," says Sir Henry Maine in his "Ancient Law," "are more impressive than the fact that no Greek-speaking people has ever felt itself seriously perplexed by the great question of Free-will and Necessity." And because of this "it does not seem an irrelevant suggestion" that the Greeks never "showed the smallest capacity for producing a philosophy of law." None the less it was the Greek, as Sir Henry Maine himself points out, who, from a very early period in his history, evolved the idea of an inherited curse. This inheritance was not one of punishment, but rather of fresh offence evoking its own punishment, so that "the responsibility of the family was reconciled with the newer phase of thought which limited the consequences of crime to the person of the actual delinquent." This, indeed, was the Greek notion of Necessity, and nowhere is it more forcibly expressed than in the treatment of the legends which grouped themselves around the house of Pelops.

In his masterly introduction to "The Electra," Sir Richard Jebb has outlined the development of the Pelopid tradition. Briefly, in the "Iliad" there is no ancestral curse attached to the descendants of Atreus. It is in the "Odyssey" that the hint of fate is first suggested, when it is held in the council of the gods that Ægisthus has acted "beyond his destiny," and that punishment is due to him from Orestes, son of Agamemnon. Later on the idea of the inherited curse becomes definite, and Clytemnestra, and not Ægisthus, is represented as the chief criminal. At this stage, too, the avenging furies are introduced. Pindar throws into the already complicated myth the idea that Clytemnestra's crime is prompted by revenge for Iphigeneia's sacrifice at Aulis. The story commenced with a son's just vengeance on his father's murderer, but it was developed until it became a *motif* for the most profound drama. Here Æschylus takes up the theme and weaves it into a trilogy in which the individual destiny is finally subordinate to the supreme necessity, the higher law of Zeus. Sophocles, on the other hand, reverts to the simple Homeric legend, and for him there is no balancing of motives, no analysis of the greater and lesser guilt. For him Orestes stands as the just performer of a just action. With Euripides the tragic legend enters into contact with common life.

Elsewhere, in his introduction to "Oedipus Tyrannus," Sir Richard Jebb traces the modern treatment of the Sophoclean Oedipus from Corneille to Voltaire, showing the overwhelming modern tendency to depart from the simplicity of the central Greek notions: "the irresistible power of destiny, and the sacredness of the primary

natural ties, as measured by the horror of an unconscious sin against it." The fascination of these two ideas is witnessed by continual efforts to reproduce them in modern poetry, and at the same time to preserve the ancient form. The very fact that these dramatists one and all depart from the spirit proves the permanent hold which the Greek idea of form has, to a certain extent, always preserved upon the modern mind. This has accounted for what we like to call the "pseudo-classicism" of the French stage, and it explains why Milton originally intended that "Paradise Lost" should have the outward appearance of the "Samson Agonistes." That play, indeed, is consciously Greek in form, and obeys in all outward respects, not excepting—as Prof. Butler has pointed out—the Æschylean conception of suffering in place of action. But how different is the spirit! Let us glance at one passage, the chorus commencing at line 1268 and ending at line 1307. In the first eighteen lines we have an Hebraic psalm, then come ten lines which might have been translated almost word for word from Euripides, while the chorus closes with all the outward objectivity which belonged to the Greek looker-on, blended with the Hebraic hint of prophecy.

Again, how impossible it was for Voltaire to restore a lost drama of Euripides, in spite of all his calculated frigidity and the difficult suppression of romantic love. Imagine the proverbial:—

Le premier qui fut roi fut un soldat heureux;  
Qui sert bien son pays n'a pas besoin d'aïeux,

spoken through a tragic mask. We moderns are occasionally haunted by a sensation that there is a certain truth in the saying that the ancients alone have been artists.

In "La Faustin" Edmond de Goncourt admirably interprets this involuntary respect when he brings the great French actress to M. Athanassiadis to learn from Greek lips the heart of Phœdra before she interprets Phœdre. For, Athanassiadis, modern as he is, has preserved the secret of the ancient source:—

Et Athanassiadis, arrivé à l'accusation posthume de Phœdre contre son beau-fils, se mettait à expliquer aux deux femmes, avec une intelligence qui surprit la Faustin, cette figure de fatalité bien autrement grande, bien autrement humaine, bien autrement *nature* dans son ressentiment amoureux, que la femme conventionnelle et théâtralement *sympathique*, peinte par le poète de la cour de Louis XIV.

But to return to the legend of Pelops. Prof. Tyrrell, in his preface to Mr. Arnold Graves's "Clytemnestra" (Longmans), writes:—

I have already pointed to the fact that he deals with the story from the standpoint of the modern dramatist. By this, I do not mean to suggest that he has followed the example of Voltaire, Alfieri, or Thompson, and made his characters modern, complex, neurotic, hysterical. On the contrary, he has kept them simple, strong, restrained, archaic.

These words written by a scholar who is impregnated with the spirit of Greek tragedy are conclusive evidence that Mr. Graves's drama is a genuine exception to what we have ventured to call the overwhelming modern tendency. This fact, apart from all other literary considerations, makes this drama worthy of serious study.

To Prof. Tyrrell the note of Greek tragedy is near and actual, but the general reader is not easily convinced of the illusion of Hellas. How far is this modern interpretation likely to produce for him the lost charm, so cold, so inexplicably remote from the gush and strain of modern sentiment? On the surface he will recognise some obvious differentiations from Greek tragedy. He will recognise that the chorus is neither the expression of "ideal" nor average opinion, nor yet merely ornate and detached from the action. He will recognise that the unities of time and place are not observed, and that one is irresistibly reminded of a

double motif of action in following the fortunes of Electra. He will see at work the psychology of the human will rather than the overhanging necessity of Zeus. These things, apart altogether from variations from any Greek legend and the introduction of fresh characters, the general reader will recognise. But he will also see that a trilogy has been treated as an organic whole, and that the unities have been observed in regard to each subordinate part. Moreover, he will recognise a genuine tendency towards the acceptance of certain theories, essentially Greek. He will see a tendency towards avoiding violence before the curtain, the use of the messenger, and above all the haunting repetition of the actual words of the soothsayer. These things are so, and if in deference to modern taste the author has in this or that particular departed from the ancient legend, he has none the less infused into English verse something of the atmosphere of Greek tragedy. Here is a passage in which Cassandra describes the murder of Agamemnon:—

He casts aside  
His coat of mail, and drops his trusty sword.  
She takes a goblet, fills it full with wine,  
He takes it from her hand, and drains the bowl.  
And lays him down to rest. [Pauses.] See how his lids  
Already droop, half closed; his limbs relax;  
She wraps a robe around him, croons a stave  
To soothe the slumberer; then rises soft,  
Seizes a twisted net, and in its toils  
Makes fast the drowsing victim to the altar. [Pauses.]  
All is made ready for the sacrifice.  
The axe is raised: now through the yielding air  
The swift steel flashes in its lightning sweep.

Now, it is submitted that this is not at all a metrical adaptation, but rather a genuine interpretation, after the Greek manner, of Greek thought.

Above all, Mr. Graves has the supreme fidelity of simplicity, the simplicity of the dignified but immediate expression of the immediate emotion which drew from *Œdipus*, as he listened to the herdsman's tale, that appalling utterance of despair; the simplicity which caused that same *Œdipus*, no longer "*Tyrannus*," to cry out to "the all-seeing *Eumenides*": "Pity this poor wraith of *Œdipus*—for verily 'tis the man of old no more." This simplicity is the keynote to swiftness of action, and Mr. Graves has caught something of its spirit. The deepest note in Greek tragedy on its human side is the farewell to light. From the royal appeal of *Antigone*, as she prepares to face the terrible darkness, to the mournful acquiescence of *Polyxena* awaiting a swifter death, there is always the infinite regret at leaving the sunlight. This note, also, Mr. Graves has caught, and there is a genuine and restrained dignity in the passage commencing "Good-bye, dear *Argos*," which *Electra* utters, already, as she imagines, upon the threshold of death.

Greek tragedy may almost be considered as the touchstone of modern nations so inevitably do they read their own racial characteristics into its severe harmony. And because he has kept his characters "simple, strong, restrained, archaic," Mr. Graves's work is a profoundly interesting anomaly.

## A Bewildered Poet.

LITERATURE has had many spectres, and by this we mean not men who had outlived the common meed of their fame, but rather men who had exhausted their own emotions. Of these spectres Alfred de Musset was perhaps the most significant, because he was the most pitied and the most loved. But de Musset lived his hour, and could always remember that once the wine of life had tasted sweet, that once the rhythm of hope and youth had rung true, that

once a woman's smile had reflected destiny. But there are other spectres to whom there is no consolation, for whom there is no appeal from the stale verdict of the world. And of these condemned ones the most pathetic figure of all is James Clarence Mangan, the centenary of whose birth is being celebrated this month.

Others have turned consciously aside from the mental grooves of their generation, and sought from art not the healing consolation which should be common to all, but rather a personal enjoyment, exclusive, exotic, dangerous. Such were Charles Baudelaire and Edgar Allen Poe. But there is no just parallel between either of these and the unfortunate Irish poet. For each of these, after his manner, obtained the reward of his sacrifice. The Frenchman who had exchanged, as it were, his store of human life blood for strange artistic vibrations, fashioned from these poisoned dreams masterpieces of form, permanent manifestations of what he had purchased from art at the expense of life. The American, abandoning the main currents of the national life around him, none the less drew, from his very loneliness, his suffering, his despair, the joy of the artist. Neither of these could ever have regretted their strange barter. Such as they were, in spite of external circumstances, these men were masters of their destinies and did the thing they willed in the way they willed. But it was quite otherwise with Mangan.

The Irish poet was not at all a rebel in any sense of the word. He came into the world incongruous and alien, and he lived and died incongruous and alien. Sensitive, imaginative, beautiful, he was the son of a Dublin grocer. Then, after a few years of study under an erudite Irish priest, necessity turned him into a bread-winner for his family. He worked at a scrivener's for seven and at an attorney's for three years. They were long years for Mangan. They were long years and bitter years, for his fellow-clerks knew well that this strange figure was such as no other clerk had ever been or could ever be. And their subtle intelligences resented the incongruity, and for ten years it was driven home to Mangan that it is a hard world for those who do not fit into the settled niches. But Mangan never fitted in, could not fit in after any fashion. It was as though one were to initiate the *Faun of Praxiteles* into the mysteries of Wall Street, this moulding of a dreamer to the mental standpoint of a scrivener's office. It may have been discipline in realities, but Mangan was incapable of learning from realities—that was the secret of his temperament. But he was very sensitive, and between them all they knew well how to handle him: he was their butt for ten difficult years. Mangan came out of it all more confused by actuality than ever. It was still necessary, apparently, to remain in this odd world, and so, after trying two or three other phases of employment, he took definitely to journalism. His past, incidentally, had not driven him mad, but it had driven him to the hopeless relief of alcohol. Mangan the poet-dreamer, who sought vaguely from life the fleeting illusions of a lost poetry, had become a "case" for well-meaning philanthropists. It was certainly an odd world, but they never drove him mad—he died at forty-six.

Mangan was probably no more a journalist in the accepted sense than he had been an attorney's clerk. But even he had at one time some glimpses of the actual wonder of life. We need not recall the poor faded romance of the lady who had once the power to woo Mangan from his dreams. It is enough to say that the memory of this futile little tragedy blended easily with such sombre impressions as had been stamped upon the poet's heart.

As a man he seems to have been not so much miserable as dazed. He could not suffer from life quite as his companions intended that he should suffer, because he was bewildered. But sometimes the poet in him, so much greater than the man, burst out. Then he spoke as one who had peered into the depths of life. But these



were only glimpses, for Mangan the poet, as well as the man, was baffled by reality.

He adhered always with curious tenacity to the two sources of his inspiration. Everybody knows that he "translated" foreign languages of which he was completely ignorant, but he did learn German, and he did appreciate that detachment from actuality which is to be obtained from German philosophy. That, together with the legends of the past—Eastern and Celtic—was the woof out of which Mangan's fantasies were woven.

It is well that we should remember him, for he was a poet, and a poet, moreover, who, not consciously like Baudelaire and Poe, was yet true to the divine suffering within him. This was a suffering of which attorneys' clerks and well-meaning philanthropists never dreamed. And he gave it out in song, too bewildered to recognise that the artist's fire and the poet's rapture were really his. Pathetically noble in an ignoble setting, revealing the dreams of the centuries without interpreting his own, giving gold and having, as it were, alms thrust upon him, he stands for ever a symbolic figure of his race.

## Swift's Famous Joke.

THE "Critical Essays and Literary Fragments" which Messrs. Constable have reprinted, in an arranged and chronological form, from Mr. Arber's well-known "English Garner," present a very interesting bird's-eye view of the lanes and alleys in English prose, from the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century. They are taken from the pamphlets—the journalism of the past; and rescue for us all manner of curious and valuable writings long vanished from the public eye. Amidst such various riches, we are disposed to fasten on one series of pamphlets, which not only are from a great and "vanished hand," but preserve a once celebrated jest, unknown to the present day.

Did the volume contain nothing but the Partridge pamphlets, it would be justified, for they are the record of the most whimsical and amusing hoax ever perpetrated. To take the full flavour of it, let us conceive that Mr. Stead (for example) were the victim; and that Mr. G. B. Shaw, not content with predicting and afterwards publishing an account of his death, proceeded earnestly to demonstrate to Mr. Stead that he was under a delusion in imagining himself to be alive. That is a fair image of Swift's famous joke. Partridge played helplessly into Swift's hands. Partridge, let us add, resembled Mr. Stead only in his public connection with occult matters. He was a well-known maker of almanacs, after the fashion of Old Moore, Zadkiel, and other modern prophets. Swift, under the name of Isaac Bickerstaff, published an ironical attack on these men; in which he put forth a string of predictions on his own account. One prediction was the death of the Duke of Noailles; but the first was the death of the prophet Partridge himself, which was fixed for eleven at night on the 29th of March, 1708. The date past, out came a letter from a Revenue Officer to a Noble Lord, giving a minute account of Partridge's death—in the realistic style which Defoe afterwards made his own. Partridge engaged a writer to defend him; but the writer wickedly upheld the jest, and Partridge put forth the defence in all good faith. The Portuguese Inquisition actually burned the pamphlet predicting the Duke of Noailles' death; and our own Stationers' Hall, not to be behindhand, struck Partridge's name off the rolls, as defunct. Verses on his death, written by Swift, were hawked through the street, tradesmen called to arrange for his funeral. Poor bewildered Partridge published in his almanack a solemn declaration that he was still alive, and as well as ever he was in his

life: "as I was also at that 29th of March"—the date of his alleged death. Up to this point Swift's pamphlets, apart from the hoax itself, are not very humorous. But now he saw his chance, and joyously seized it. Partridge had called him (or the supposed Bickerstaff) "fool," "villain," and "impudent fellow," for asserting Partridge to be dead, whereas he was alive. Swift declares these very improper terms to apply to anyone, "only for differing from him in a point merely speculative." "A point merely speculative" is delicious; and one feels that Swift has at last recovered his trick of fence, is "in form," as we should say. So it proves, throughout this final pamphlet. He contends to Partridge's face that he is mistaken in supposing himself to be alive. And dealing with the poor astrologer's asseveration that the prediction of his death has not come true, Swift rejoins—with delightful effrontery—that Partridge himself is the only person to maintain this!

He has been indeed so wise as to make no objection against the truth of my predictions, except in one single point, relating to himself. And to demonstrate how much men are blinded by their own partiality, I do solemnly assure the reader, that he is the *only* person from whom I ever heard that objection offered! which consideration alone, I think, will take off its weight.

With my utmost endeavours, I have not been able to trace above two objections ever made against the truth of my last year's *Predictions*. The first was of a Frenchman, who was pleased to publish to the world, that the Cardinal de Noailles was still alive, notwithstanding the pretended prophecy of Monsieur Bickerstaffe. But how far a Frenchman, a Papist, and an enemy, is to be believed, in his own cause, against an English Protestant, who is true to the Government, I shall leave to the candid and impartial reader.

The other objection is the unhappy occasion of this discourse, and relateth to an article in my *Predictions*, which foretold the death of Mr. Partridge to happen on March 29th, 1708. This, he is pleased to contradict absolutely, in the *Almanack* he has published for the present year. . . . In that work, he very roundly asserts that he is *not only now alive, but was likewise alive upon that very 29th of March, when I had foretold he should die*. This is the subject of the present controversy between us, which I design to handle with all brevity, perspicuity, and calmness. In this dispute I am sensible the eyes, not only of England, but of all Europe will be upon us: and the Learned in every country will, I doubt not, take part on that side where they find most appearance of truth and reason. Without entering into criticisms of Chronology about the hour of his death, I shall only prove that Mr. Partridge is *not alive*.

Even at this distance of time, one must lay down the book and laugh. Swift then proceeds gravely to advance arguments worthy of the dispute:—

My first argument is thus. Above a thousand Gentlemen having bought his *Almanack* for this year, merely to find what he said against me: at every line they read, they would lift up their eyes, and cry out, between rage and laughter, *They were sure, no man alive ever wrote such stuff as this!* Neither did I ever hear that opinion disputed. So that Mr. Partridge lieth under a dilemma, either of disowning his *Almanack*, or allowing himself to be *no man alive*.

Death is defined by all philosophers a separation of the soul and body. Now it is certain that the poor woman [Mrs. Partridge], who has best reason to know, has gone about for some time to every alley in the neighbourhood, and swore to her gossips that *her husband had neither life nor soul in him*. Therefore, if an *uninformed* carcass walks still about, and is pleased to call itself Partridge, Mr. Bickerstaff doth not think himself any way answerable for that! Neither had the said carcass any right to beat the poor boy who happened to pass by in the street, crying, *A full and true account of Dr. Partridge's death, &c.*

Secondly, Mr. Partridge pretendeth to tell fortunes and recover stolen goods, which all the parish says he must do by conversing with the Devil and other evil spirits; and no wise man will ever allow, he could converse personally with either, until after he was dead.

Thirdly, I will plainly prove him to be dead out of his own *Almanack* for this year; and from the very passage which he produceth to make us think him alive. He there

sayeth, *He is not only now alive, but was also alive upon that very 29th of March, which I foretold he should die on.* By this, he declareth his opinion a man may be alive now, who was not alive a twelvemonth ago. And indeed, here lies the sophistry of his argument. He dareth not assert, he was alive ever since the 29th of March! but that he is now alive, and was so on that day. I grant the latter, for he did not die until night, as appeareth in a printed account of his death, in a *Letter to a Lord*; and whether he be since revived, I leave the world to judge! This indeed is perfect cavilling, and I am ashamed to dwell any longer upon it. . . .

There is one objection against Mr. Partridge's death, which I have sometimes met with . . . that he continueth to write Almanacks. But this is no more than what is common to all of that profession. Gadbury, Poor Robin, Dove, Wing, and several others, do yearly publish their Almanacks, though several of them have been dead since before the Revolution.

It is the talent of our age and nation to turn things of the greatest importance into ridicule. When the end of the year had verified all my *Predictions*, out cometh Mr. Partridge's Almanack, disputing the point of his death. So that I am employed, like the General who was forced to kill his enemies twice over, whom a necromancer had raised to life.

All this is in Swift's true vein of profound seriousness in setting forth and sustaining the absurdest contentions, which yet have a perverse ingenuity irresistibly comic. Partridge's helpless rage, and the growing mirth of the town as the malicious effrontery of the plot unfolded, can readily be imagined, and are an integral part of the humour of the thing. Another effort in the ironic vein is Bishop Copleston's "Advice to a Young Reviewer." It is still in large measure applicable to our own day; for though the proportion of honest and intelligent reviewing has happily increased, the ignorant and dull reviewer, confident in the direct ratio of his ignorance, is always with us. But though clever, Copleston is not brilliant, and reads tamely after Swift. The best part of his skit is the mock-review of Milton's "L'Allegro"—a satire on the cheap word-catching criticism that still crops up at times. But further we may not be tempted to follow a book full of curious by-ways in literature.

## Paris Letter.

(From our French Correspondent.)

M. PIERRE LOTI's new book "L'Inde" is a superb *tour de force*. Here is an entire volume of description without a single incident, without wit or humour to brighten it, without even a lively page from first to last, and which is beautiful in its monotonous way. Do not try to read it at a sitting, and for this reason it gained by its fortnightly appearance in the "Revue des Deux Mondes," when each part, read separately, left the impression of a masterpiece. Loti's exquisite style in gaining maturity has added solidity to its charm. There are less lovely passages to quote, but a rarer harmony, and it is astonishing that a writer who has so abundantly abused description should continue it ever with an inexhaustible witchery of expression, an unwearied observation of nature, with all the reverie and delicate delight of youth. Whatever else may happen to M. Loti, it is evident he cannot grow old. To-day he writes: "The intimate charm of a new zone, into which I penetrate at the fall of day, resides for me in its delicate soil, somewhat dry, somewhat sandy, covered with a short, fine herbage as was the soil of the woods familiar to me in childhood. And as if to strengthen the illusion of my native country scenes, see the pathways traced by shepherds and their flocks; see these trees of slender sombre foliage, of grey fibres, like the green oaks of home; but for the big red lilies which afar, and further still, surprise my eye, it is quite homelike, the same pastoral calm, and the same melancholy of evening."

M. Loti's originality lies in the way exterior and audible things around him affect him. It is purely a question of temperament, for his imagination is slight,

and he has not a grain of wit. His books of travel are nothing of a precise or instructive account of the lands and races he has known. They are records of the state of soul of M. Loti, of the particular bent of his sentimental attitude while voyaging in those far-off mysterious Eastern lands of his predilection. The state of his soul is varied in its monotony, for he is lastingly plunged in melancholy, and in contemplating nature, which is his chief mission in life, he can never disentangle his own individuality from the immense and eternal objects around him. But what surprising limpidity of vision! What an exquisite sense of atmosphere! Coming across the Indian Ocean outside the coast of Travancore, he writes charmingly: "I found myself in a solitude of sand amidst downs over which lingered the wavering rays of an enormous blood-hued sun ready to drop behind the horizon. A few scant palms, dishevelled and weather-stained, bent here and there in the same sense, having yielded as the trees of our coast do to the continued effort of the marine breeze. All this sand heaped up for centuries and centuries, all this prodigious crumbling of stones, madrepore, shells, all this pulverisation of myriad existences, went to announce the terrible neighbourhood. And then the great eternal voice made itself heard. And suddenly, at a bend of the road in those sandhills the moving infinite appeared. . . . Elsewhere the life of men is instinctively carried to the sea, here on the contrary they turn from it as from the void and from death. Here the sea is but the insuperable abyss, which serves for nought and terrifies. The sea is almost inaccessible, and no one ventures upon it. Along the unending line of breakers, along the unending line of sand, I see scarce other human trace than an old granite temple, rough and heavy, with defaced columns, half eaten away with spray and salt; it is there to conjure and quiet the devouring nothingness that imprisons Travancore and which, this evening calm, will, in a little while, as soon as the summer monsoon begins, break out in a season's fury."

The most impressive part of the book is that devoted to "Famished India." The sentiment of pity is almost as strong in Loti as the sentiment of nature. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that he revels in the one quite as much as in the other; but in the last part, "Towards Benares," he leads us out of almost immitigable misery into what he calls the "glory of morning" into the matchless magic and mystery of the East, and these pages are impregnated with all its enchantment and its charm. Dissatisfied with worn-out Christianity, Loti has gone to refresh his jaded spirit at the fount of mysticism and soothe his unquiet soul in the cradle of all religions. "From the depths of the plains where flows the old Ganges, from the depths of the miasmic plain of mire and herbage misted still with the vapours of night, the eternal sun rises and encounters day after day for the past three thousand years, arresting its first rosy ray, the granite of Benares, the red pyramids, the golden points, the entire sacred town raised in amphitheatre as if to seize avidly the initial light and array itself in the glory of morning." Here he meets Mrs. Besant, who initiates him in the mysteries of Oriental wisdom, and he sits with the sages in the House of Silence, seeking to reach complete detachment from all earthly things. "I know this renouncement will pass, and that little by little, escaped from this sphere of influence, I shall return to life, but never as before. The new germ which has been deposited in my soul is destined to invade it, and will guide me back to Benares. And how pitiable and vain is revealed to me what was till now my life in this world: wild as I was about form and colour, passionately enamoured of terrestrial life, ravenous to seize all that is ephemeral, to retain all that passes!" "L'Inde" is a book full of pages of an indescribable beauty. H. L.



# Impressions.

## XXXII.—The Sage.

He was Retired Leisure; and he, like the superannuated man, was to be met with in a trim garden. A low, white fencing, overgrown by a green creeper, divided his garden from the road, and I never saw him elsewhere than in his garden. I passed down the road twice a day, on my way to and from the station, and when he was not there, which was rarely, the savour of the walk went. Always was he either working with spade and trowel, or sitting in the porch gazing blandly at his vegetables and herbaceous borders. Fresh-complexioned, grey but hearty, this was a man at one with the world, and in harmony with his environment. Youth had gone, leaving no regrets. The future had no terror; by virtue of some interior wisdom, inherited or acquired, he was able to live happily in the present. Here, I said to myself, quoting Maeterlinck, has he built his refuge, "being a little weary; not disgusted, for the large aversions are unknown to the sage, but a little weary of interrogating men, whose answers to the only interesting questions one can put concerning nature and her veritable laws are far less simple than those that are given by animals and plants."

I reflected on the answers that this sage might win from his companions—from the row of symmetrical rose trees, each with its name inscribed on a flapping tag; the asparagus and beans; the lilac tree; the somnolent collie; the cat, black and ear-bitten; or the blackbird, wicker-caged. I contrasted the satisfactory answers he might receive with those I vainly tried to distill from books, "but evermore came out from the same door as in I went." Would it help him, as it had helped me for a morning, to believe in the truth of that maxim of Indian wisdom which affirms that "a man is born into the world which he has made"? The four walls of my chamber could not contain my thought; yet the air that blew above his rose trees, the rain that washed his creeper, did not tempt his thought from that tilled plot where flowers and vegetables groped into sentient life. What to this gardener, to this sage who had discovered the secret of living, profited such wisdom as this: "To be happy is only to have freed one's soul from the unrest of happiness"; or this: "To the soul that is slowly awakening all appears sacrifice"; or this: "To have known how to change the past into a few saddened smiles—is this not to master the future?"; or this: "Our thoughts and emotions are often but spray flung up from hidden tides that follow a moon no eye can see." He had his answer to all the riddles, present, past, and future.

This sage, who never gave me good-morning or good-night, seemed, in his calm detachment from the world, to be the tutelary genius of that grass-green valley. Often I thought of him through the vicissitudes and vexations of the day, and the thought brought peace. To him had come that wisdom of the world which is the wisdom of the ages. Shocks and chances passed him by: he had his garden.

One evening, when hardly a tree but had its small brown thrush filling the rain-washed air with melody, I came down the hill towards his garden, where from afar off I had spied his figure seated in the porch. It was a quiet evening: there were cloud mountains in the sky: the poplars stood straight and still, and from the monastery on the adjoining ridge floated the choric voices of the monks. It was the hour when we may have communications with each other without the intermediary of speech, and so when I came to his garden I leaned upon his gate and looked comprehendingly on his share in God's handiwork. Our eyes pursued the same direction, and presently he spoke, saying with gusto: "I do like to smell the beans cooking. I always leave the kitchen-door open."

# Drama.

## Dramatic Hedging.

"THE LITTLE COUNTESS" at the Avenue, although in itself by no means unentertaining, thanks mainly to the mimicry of Miss Annie Hughes, is perhaps of most interest as an object-lesson in the construction of a dramatic plot. It is a case of dramatic hedging. The whole intention hangs upon the last act. In this an irate husband pursues his wife to the chambers of the man whom he knows to have been her lover; and the fun comes from the ingenuity with which he is persuaded into the belief that she is not there, while as a matter of fact she is lying rolled up in a carpet in a corner of the room. There are hairbreadth 'scapes. A rosette, fallen from the fancy dress which the lady is wearing, nearly gives away the show. But by good fortune a precisely similar dress worn by her in earlier days is sentimentally preserved in a chest, and this is hastily mutilated and triumphantly produced in evidence. The position is further complicated by the fact that not only the wife but also the sister of the irate husband is in the chambers, and she also has to be manoeuvred away without a recognition. The theme, you will observe, is a very ancient one. It recalls the *fabliaux*, Boccaccio, Chaucer. The capital example is of course Falstaff in his buck-basket. The joke lies in the blinding and befooling of the silly husband. This is precisely in the spirit of the *fabliaux*. To the unsophisticated audiences of the middle ages, it was not a matter of concern that the husband should be wronged. Such, indeed, was rather the preferable solution. But Mr. Bancroft had to present his play before an audience that was neither mediæval nor unsophisticated, and that, in particular, was wholly unable to disentangle its dramatic from its ethical sympathies. His problem was to preserve the ingenuity of the intrigue, and at the same time to keep the audience on the side of the lady in the carpet. To this end—and also to that of building up a four-act play upon a one-act motive—dramatic hedging became imperative. Otherwise Mr. Walkley might not, without some justice, have described the play as that unmentionable thing, a *comédie rosse*. For the matter of that, even Shakespeare had to hedge. Falstaff must be fooled just as much as Ford, and Ford's own unreasonable jealousy must excuse his discomfiture. Three of Mr. Bancroft's four acts are devoted to proving that after all, in spite of the compromising situation in which she escapes being discovered, the Countess of Budleigh is a woman more sinned against than sinning. As Sadie Woodbine, Lady Budleigh had been a well-known singer and the mistress of Jack Scarlett. He had pensioned her off, but in Act I. she has heard of his wife's death, and is expecting him to return and propose to marry her. He does return, and proposes—something short of marriage. Passionate and piqued, Miss Woodbine accepts the coronet laid at her feet the same afternoon by Lord Budleigh. In Act II. Lady Budleigh is found in the somewhat uncongenial surroundings of Franklyn Hall. She has learnt to love her husband, but her frank and natural manners—in the first scene she throws a potato at a waiter—expose her to the snubbing and petty spite of her husband's aristocratic female relatives. Moreover, she is still persecuted by Mr. Jack Scarlett, who has succeeded in installing himself in the house in Lord Budleigh's absence. Fortunately Mr. Scarlett is comprehensive in his attachments, and is at the same time carrying on a subsidiary intrigue with the insolent and immaculate Lady Hermione Browne. Herein Lady Budleigh discerns an excellent opportunity for paying off old scores against her sister-in-law. She very ingeniously succeeds in ascertaining that an appointment has been made at Mr. Scarlett's flat at an unreasonably late hour after a fancy-dress ball, and determines to follow Lady Hermione there and expose her. This was indiscreet, for

in the meantime Lord Budleigh returns home, hears such gossip as his family have collected about his wife, and learns accidentally for the first time that she has been Scarlett's mistress. Previously he had only known, from her own lips, that she had been *somebody's* mistress. He also sets off for Scarlett's flat, intending to break off the friendship between them, and arrives just as the ladies are engaged in a row royal, while Scarlett has discreetly retired to smoke a cigarette in the courtyard. Thus the famous scene is introduced.

This arrangement appears fully to satisfy the susceptibilities of the audience. Lady Budleigh means her husband no wrong, and therefore we are glad that she is not discovered in the carpet. It is true that she has come to the flat with the somewhat spiteful intention of bringing another woman, whose correspondence she has surreptitiously opened, to her knees. But this does not offend our susceptibilities. Everything, dramatically speaking, is permitted to the woman who intends her husband no wrong, and the audience cleave to her through thick and thin. I must admit that my own sympathies were rather doubtful, but this was less because she had opened the letter than because of the extremely hideous scarlet Pierrot costume in which she had gone to the fancy dress ball. The merit of such a play naturally depends mainly upon its handling by author and actors. Miss Annie Hughes is extremely well worth seeing in a *rose* part. Mr. Bancroft contributes some effective situations, of which the best is that in the first act, when Jack Scarlett fails to make his former mistress precisely the proposal which she expects from him. But Mr. Bancroft's conceptions of humour and of epigram are not mine, and he does not attain the verbal felicity that is essential to my private enjoyment of a modern comedy. It is natural that Lady Budleigh should talk slang; but why should she talk the chastened and, in fact, obsolete slang which you hear from proper little shop-girls in the Twopenny Tube? I do not believe that even her mother-in-law would have been shocked by it.

E. K. CHAMBERS.

## Art.

### The Royal Academy Re-Visited.

HAVING made a choice among the pictures at the Royal Academy last week, it may be as well to reassert that this heterogeneous collection is not representative of the best art of the country. One could mention the names of twenty painters, intriguing themselves quietly with art, but not pursuing her into the market-place, whose names on the beadroll of Burlington House are worthy to be filed. Most have ceased to submit pictures; some have never made the hazard; a few offer their works furtively; but nobody now, like Mr. Sickert in merrier days, announces by advertisement that he has had the honour of having a picture declined. Probably no corporate body has been so riddled with criticism as the Royal Academy, criticism which has culminated this year in Mr. MacColl's trenchant exposure of the administration of the Chantrey Bequest; and no corporate body is so popular with the public. Other picture exhibitions have their dwindling share of visitors: the Academy is always crowded. It is one of the few annual sights of London that the British public insists on seeing. Every morning for three months in the year the suburban trains shoot Royal Academy sightseers into London. The women always wear their brightest dresses: you cannot mistake them, and you can verify your opinion by the gleam of the blue catalogue they carry on their return journey. Art, in the form of the summer exhibition at Burlington

House, is as popular as a football match. Its popularity increases every year, and shows no sign of waning. The exhibition, like musical comedies, newspaper competitions, and "Home Chat" suits the public: it is always in fashion, and the Royal Academy is the very worst place in London to look at pictures. Last Saturday afternoon you could not see the stairs for the people: they passed up at snail's pace, and in the rooms themselves the bright dresses of the women fought with the brighter colours of the pictures; the individual was pushed here and there, and could only approach a picture after a rude and dishevelled scrimmage. Such are the conditions under which we study an art which demands isolated repose and calm contemplation. What would be the feelings of a party of grave Dutchmen, of a past day, set down in this hurly-burly on a May afternoon? They painted life, direct and simple, low in key and grey in tone as life is for most of us—pictures on which the imagination can play. The majority of the Academy pictures stultify the imagination. Orgies of colour, wildly invented historical or mythical scenes, packed frame to frame, do not stimulate: they tire.

And yet the Royal Academy is an interesting place in which to spend an afternoon, especially with a loquacious painter as cicerone. A painter does not as a rule seek for unity in a picture (that is the province of the higher criticism), but, with roaming thumb, he will indicate pleasing passages in a picture in a rushing climax of appreciation. One such, an acquaintance, was unable, like myself, to discover any unknown painter of outstanding merit. The Academy is not the place for new reputations. The tyro is too timid to be himself: he paints something that will suit, something that will stand the rivalry of the typical, vivid summer exhibition picture. How the younger reputations start up and disappear! There was a time not long ago when the name of Mr. Somerscales was in everybody's mouth. He still exhibits. Mr. Dudley Hardy also still exhibits. Humourously philosophical, he shows two tiny pictures in the manner of Monticelli. Mr. Bramley has one portrait. Mr. Brangwyn, like a score of other artists whose names are honoured in the studios, and on the Continent, shows nothing.

In spite of such abstentions, and the modesty of certain painters, the critic is each year face to face with an enormous collection of pictures. How shall he treat them? Most of the works show capacity and intelligence, but almost all have been painted for exhibition, and the only way, apparently, to treat an exhibition picture is to describe it, enlarging upon the sentimental, emotional, or didactic "message" that it conveys to the imagination of the critic. Thus, in one journal, apropos of Mr. Collier's "The Prodigal Daughter," I read: "This Magda may return once again, worn, marred, in rags like the prodigal, her prototype—all her pride, all her rebellion beaten down, all her love of life trampled out. What then?" Another critic finds Mr. Goodwin's "The Gate of the Inferno" so "inexpressibly impressive," that he regrets it was not bought by the Chantrey trustees. "What next?" I can hear Mr. MacColl saying. A third has had the happy idea of forming an inner Academy from the larger one. These critics are all attached to the daily papers which, following their traditions, describe the pictures in detail, usually ending with a sigh, intended to be regretful, that they have not space to notice the water-colours and sculpture. The weekly journals apparently vie with each other as to which can mention the fewest number of pictures. One of them passes over all the established reputations and selects three small, obscure canvases for commendation. The numbers of these I pencilled on my shirt-cuff, and made a special discipleship journey to the exhibition on their account, but without the anticipated thrills. The critic of another weekly journal devotes his first article to trying to find out "the real cause which makes each annual exhibition so disappointing." I,



having already discussed the collection as a whole, proposed to consider in this article the drawings, etchings, and sculpture. But there is not much to be said about the water-colours and etchings. Here, owing partly to the exigences of space, we are at a great disadvantage compared with the Salon, where one wanders through endless, twilight rooms on the ground floor, spending a day before colour-prints, lithographs, drawings, etchings, and engravings instinct with originality and vitality. At the Academy the patchwork quilt look of the walls given up to water-colours and black and white, the feeling of circumscription, and the humid odour of tea are against connoisseurship. One water-colour stands out from the rest—Mr. H. R. Oddy's brilliant study of "A Shearing: Duddon Dale."

The sculpture also suffers from want of space. You could drop our show into a corner of the enormous glass-roofed caravansary where the French sculptors scatter their white ingenuities. If Mr. Colton's pretty, finished "Springtide of Life," which has been purchased by the Chantrey Bequest, is typical of the style of work that the Council admire, the Selecting Committee showed their catholicity by admitting Miss Pownall's vigorous, horrible "The Harpy Celeno." The way her talons dig into her breast is powerful, to say the least. Mr. Frampton's work is always accomplished. His bust of "Chaucer," the eyes in his shrewd, wise, kindly face momentarily raised from the book he holds, is realistically detailed without being finical. Good, and well-planned, is Mr. Frampton's bust of "Sir Walter Besant," but the signification of his "Part of a Memorial to a Hero" in low relief, is too obscure. It promised well at first glance, but on closer examination is confused and troublesome to the eye. The highest type of the memorial effigy is the recumbent figure, and I submit that all memorials should suggest the simplicity and quietude of death, or some attitude of introspective solitariness like Michaelangelo's immortal monuments to the Medici. Mr. Alexander Fisher's "Commemorative Gift to C. E. Schwann, Esq.," in silver and enamel, although it bears every sign of ingenuity and continuous labour, is the antithesis of simplicity. It would take an hour to explain the meaning of this example of "the new art" in silversmithy. Perhaps that was the intention of the donors. If so, all is well.

I pass to the case of beautiful caskets, &c., in silver, wrought steel, translucent and champlevé enamels by Mr. Nelson Dawson and Mrs. Dawson at the New Gallery. There are fourteen specimens. I was examining these gifts to kings, princes and warriors with growing pleasure when an elderly, overdressed woman approached. Her eyes swept over the caskets: then turning to her companion she said, "'Ow much are they?" That is the English way.

C. L. H.

## Science.

### The Source of Life.

THAT there was, as there will be, a time when our earth was uninhabited by living things, everyone must needs admit. She was then too hot, as one day she will be too cold, for life to be supportable. It is also recognised that only a relatively brief period in the history of a world fulfils the conditions necessary for the presence of living forms, a fact which has recently been used by Sir Oliver Lodge to support the contention that our planet is probably at the present time the only inhabited member of the solar system, despite the apparent though very doubtful evidence from Mars. And, knowing as we now do, that other worlds are such stuff as ours is made of, here is no further value in the speculation that life might

exist in other planets under conditions which would be inadequate for its support upon ours.

As to our "rotatory island, crowded with predatory life and more drenched with blood than was ever mutinied ship," we have long inquired when and under what conditions life began. And physiologists assert that the temperature of the surface of the earth must have been "somewhat above the freezing point, and somewhat less than halfway to the boiling point of water." Omitting for the moment the question of Creative Design which Lord Kelvin, the greatest living scientist, has just again brought before us, we may follow Buffon and argue that life probably began in the polar area, which would be the earliest to cool, and probably, also, in the sea, where liquid water would first be present. Lord Kelvin himself was the foremost worker in the prolonged and somewhat controversial inquiry as to the time when such conditions were first established. Taking into account the rate at which the earth parts with her store of heat, the increase in the length of the day—due to the tides, mainly under lunar influence, acting as a brake upon the globe's rotation—and the probable age of the sun, "some such period of time as one hundred million years ago" was given by Lord Kelvin as an approximate estimate. The matter is very doubtful, and afforded Lord Salisbury the opportunity for many gibes in his presidential address to the British Association in 1894. Not seeing that geological time was mainly speculative, and was always alterable if the physicists made such alterations necessary, he said that "the jellyfish would have been dissipated in steam long before he had had a chance of displaying that advantageous variation which was to make him the ancestor of the human race." He therefore returned a verdict of "not proven" upon Darwinism: and this only nine years ago! Prof. Perry, agreeing with everyone else that it was "hopeless to expect that Lord Kelvin had made an error in calculation," challenged some of his data and thereby set back the geological clock. Recently, however, the age of the earth's crust has been calculated by estimating the salt in the ocean and calculating the rate of its carriage there by rivers, and something like ninety millions of years, I believe, was arrived at. There we may let the matter rest for the nonce. Already there are definite, though wide, limits with which we may be content.

Having answered, as well as we may, the question, when? we ask the further question, how? This is infinitely more difficult, but child's play compared with the ultimate question, why? First, then, can we manufacture life now? Is there spontaneous generation? If we bring the necessary elements and compounds together at the necessary temperature, can we manufacture protoplasm? Is the living cell less distinct than formerly from inorganic matter? Do tales of cells of gelatine all but alive bear any criticism? The answer to all these questions is as emphatic a negative as language will convey. I confess, for myself, that I can scarcely believe it will always be so. That the gap would some day be bridged by chemistry was Darwin's opinion, expressed in a letter dated 1882. Last week there was opened at Liverpool the first laboratory in this country for the study of bio-chemistry. This subject, the chemistry of life, lies at the root of all these problems, and we are only at the beginning of it. As to the present time, however, we all follow Harvey and Virchow, and maintain the dogma, "Omnis cellula e cellula"; every living unit, in this epoch, at least, is from a pre-existent living unit. Whence, then, the first speck of protoplasm? Lord Kelvin, whom the problem has always fascinated, ventured the guess that life had been brought to our planet by a meteorite or a comet from one of our neighbours. That merely transferred the site of the problem, and was, even then, untenable. The only other theory, not invoking supernatural aid, with which I am acquainted, is the so-called

carbon-theory of Haeckel, a distinguished zoologist. Proposed because it would not suit his purpose to confess ignorance, and formulated without special physiological or chemical knowledge, that theory only obtains amongst those amateur followers of Haeckel who boast a scientific pantheism, who desire a scientific basis for their belief, and who, being ignorant of scientific facts or methods, are not in a position to criticise unscientific dogmas. Suffice it that that theory makes carbon God, accredits it with the power of gathering to itself three other elements—oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen—and therewith forming protoplasm. There is no foundation for the theory. Phosphorus, not to mention sulphur, is an essential constituent of the most central and complex substance in protoplasm. Of the importance of these two elements Haeckel was not aware. If any element be more characteristic of protoplasm than another it is not carbon but nitrogen, upon which are built the essential components of living matter. Omit all these difficulties; postulate any compounds you please, even including the phosphorus-holding proteids of the cell-nucleus, and you are not one whit nearer living structure. The carbon theory is not heard of outside popular "rationalist" publications. It has, of course, been ignored by the distinguished correspondents of "The Times." In a word, biology at this hour knows nothing of the source of life.

Lord Kelvin, then, has recently asserted that biology demands and demonstrates Creative Design. Some few biologists are with him in this assertion: the great majority are not. Certainly there is no violation of the old dramatic axiom, "*nec Deus interit, nisi dignus vindice nodus*," but I believe such a "worthy occasion" to have been present far further back. Nor do I support the ill-conditioned letters of a distinguished botanist to "The Times." His latest letter, still unrepentant, goes far to prove him unqualified for argument with Lord Kelvin; and while writing I await with interest the great man's reply. But surely Lord Kelvin's position is intelligible. Here you have a man of intellect probably unequalled at this hour, who for sixty years has dealt with and solved problems the mere formulation of which would paralyse thought in you or me. He will measure for you the curvature and weight of a drop of water under any conditions you care to name, the breadth of an atom, or the age of a world.

But before an *amoeba* or a sprig of moss he, like us, is helpless. We are so accustomed to riddles that we take them for granted. He has only once been beaten, and that when he faced living matter. We have been content, all along, with guesses and approximations and hazardous results. He has dealt with page-long formulæ and found the value of  $x$  each time; but he questions the secret of a spore of yeast, and his formulæ are unformulable. Is it surprising, therefore, that he should call in Creative Design; even "here, where men sit and hear each other groan"?

One more thing must I add. The assumption of Almighty interposition as the immediate source of life may be unnecessary. Some day it will probably be proved to have been unnecessary. But Creative Design "before all worlds" will not thereby be disproved. And even if it be admitted in our present dilemma, it does not—as Sir W. T. Thiselton-Dyer asserts—"wipe out the whole position won for us by Darwin." Indeed, I cannot imagine where Lord Kelvin's antagonist got his ideas as to what Darwin accomplished or as to what he thought on these matters. That erroneous assertion, however, has been several times refuted elsewhere. Nor, obviously, is it more than a mere defacement of good paper to assert that, for the consideration of these questions, Lord Kelvin is "not better equipped than any person of average intelligence." But, since these words were written, Prof. Burdon-Sanderson and "The Times" itself, in a wholly admirable leading

article, has taken up the cudgels on behalf of Lord Kelvin's "transcendent ability," and I need say no more. Probably the discussion will still be raging when these words are in print. I merely wish to insist that, though Lord Kelvin is in all probability wrong in invoking special Divine aid for the production of the first speck of protoplasm, yet the biologists can furnish no other explanation at present, and neither argument nor discourtesy, neither the discovery of the secret in days to come, nor any other possibility, can, in the nature of the case, disprove the belief that the Almighty did consciously interpose for the origin of life. And if not, have the atheists or pantheists yet told us whence came the atoms of which that primordial speck was formed? With only one sentence of "The Times" editorial do I disagree: "At all events the phenomena of the origin of life are even more perplexing than those of the origin of atoms." Not at all, for living matter is made of atoms. The greater problem, that of the origin of all atoms, includes the less, that of the origin of organised and living atoms. And for the origin of atoms—these "manufactured articles" as Sir John Herschel put it—the atheists may refer us to the solar nebula, or the nebula before, or any farthest nebula they care to conceive; they cannot escape a First Cause. And if a Cause of your intelligence, why not Intelligent?

C. W. SALEEBY.

## Correspondence.

### Totemism.

SIR,—The reviewer of my "Social Origins" writes, as to my guess at the Origin of Totemism:—

He has begged the question of the period at which totemism arose. If he can demonstrate that there was a stage when women ruled, and that totemism arose so early as that, then well and good. On the contrary, he expressly says, "We are presuming that the jealousy of the elder males drove the younger males out of the group, or at least compelled them to bring in females from other groups, which would mean war." This seems to us practically to invalidate the author's arguments against such scientific writers as Mr. Spencer and Lord Avebury.

I have nothing to do with "a stage when women ruled," if ever there was such a stage. That the reckoning of descent through females is prior to the reckoning through males is as much the opinion of Lord Avebury as of Mr. E. B. Taylor, and of the late Mr. J. F. McLennan. I have cited these authors, and adopted their view. If they are right, as Totemism exists, in its strict and typical form, where reckoning through females prevails, how can the totem have been there derived and inherited from male ancestors? Mr. J. F. McLennan pointed out this objection to me many years ago. Why the question of "a stage when women ruled" is introduced I am unable to imagine. The reviewer "can scarcely understand for what class of readers" Mr. Atkinson's "essay is intended." It was intended for specialists.—Yours, &c.,

1, Marloes Road, W.

A. LANG.

[Our reviewer—as he indicated—was much interested in Mr. Atkinson's essay; but he cannot understand why a somewhat unsavoury and purely scientific essay, of value only to "specialists," should have been bound up with "Social Origins"—the more so as Mr. Atkinson's postulates seemed to him incompatible with those of Mr. Lang in his "Theory of the Origin of Totemism." This led him to suppose that possibly Mr. Lang had had in his mind an hypothetical, but nevertheless not improbable, gynococratic stage of society.]



## Irish Plays and Players.

SIR,—Your sympathetic notice of our Irish plays and players has it that they were produced under my direction. They were produced under the direction of Mr. W. Fay our stage manager, and Mr. F. Fay our teacher of speech, and by the committee of our dramatic society. Mr. W. Fay is the founder of the society, and from the outset he and I were so agreed about first principles that no written or spoken word of mine is likely to have influenced him much. I, on the other hand, have learned much from him and from his brother, who knows more than any man I have ever known about the history of speech upon the stage.—Yours, &c.,

W. B. YEATS.

## Bulwer Lytton.

SIR,—Your very well-informed contributor, "The Bookworm," in your issue of 9 May, is struck with wonder that Bulwer Lytton's "The New Timon," "St. Stephen's," and "Quarterly Essays" have not been reprinted for twenty years. The reason is very simple. Our editions have never been out of print. The first two works, together with his "Lost Tales of Miletus," are on sale with us in one volume at 2s., at which price we also publish his "Quarterly Essays."—Yours, &c.,

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## Mrs. Wharton's Works.

SIR,—In your issue of May 9, in the column signed by "The Bookworm," you mention Mrs. Wharton's works.

We shall be obliged if you will add her translation of Sudermann's "Es Lebe das Leben" under the title of "The Joy of Living," which we published a short time ago.—Yours, &c.,

DUCKWORTH &amp; Co.

3, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C.

## "Mediocre Stuff."

SIR,—I do not agree with Mr. Vincent O'Sullivan as to the alleged poem of Poe's being "mediocre stuff"—as far as it was quoted, that is to say. I have the whole poem at home, which I can send to your correspondent on my return, if he cares to see it. Some of it is very striking and bizarre, and very like Poe's style.

I have the original cutting with the poem from some American paper (I think) about the year 1870. The editor certainly believed it to be Poe's, and stated that it was found among his papers, signed by him, after his death.—Yours, &c.,

Chagford, Devon.

F. B. DOVETON.

## Our Weekly Competition.

## Result of No. 190 (New Series).

Last week we offered a prize of One Guinea for the best appreciation of "My Favourite Poem." Thirty-seven replies have been received. We award the prize to Mr. Godwin Bulger, 21, Roxburgh Avenue Liverpool, S., for the following:—

## "THE HOUND OF HEAVEN."

If comparisons be odious the most odious surely are comparisons with each other of things we love. Each beloved should stand alone. Only the pain which would come from placing another higher tells me that Mr. Francis Thompson's "The Hound of Heaven" is my favourite poem. How wonderful and beautiful it is! But one may not tell in a few words the appreciation which is wonder, fear, worship

consolation, and sheer delight. To one who has or ever has had, Faith, the poem is surely an epitome of all things. Weak, warm, human nature, "sore adread, lest having Him it must have naught beside," flying from the claims of Divine Love; the subject is personal to most of us; but the treatment is the poet's. The magnificence of the flight, the splendour of the pursuit, leave one breathless or force one to his knees, while the recurring line "Fear wist not to evade as Love wist to pursue," leaves him with a new light before his eyes and a new gladness bubbling up in his heart. To fly through time and space, across worlds, through the gold gateways of the stars, to the homes of men and the hearts of children; to find fellowship in everything yet be alien from all, until the gloom which lies so often over life is rightly seen as but the shade of a Hand outstretched caressingly: this it is to read "The Hound of Heaven." And apart from the lesson and the upliftingness of the poem, how delightful to share by appreciation the poet's power, in linked fantasies, blossomy twist, "to swing the earth a trinket at one's wrist," to hear "the red throb of the sunset-heart," to rise or droop with all that's born or dies; or at least to thrill at wonderful images and conceptions, and the lordly lines which hold them for us.

Other replies follow:—

## "LOVE IN THE VALLEY."

I think I must name as my favourite poem George Meredith's "Love in the Valley," a piece of lyrical work richer in emotional value than anything else he has written. Sometimes when I feel out of love with life, I take up that poem, and instantly the lilting rhythm works its magic; one is a boy again, thrilled in every vein by the mystery of an almost transcendent passion. One cannot write a really critical appreciation, for the emotions aroused seem to defy expression. It is a poem of the heart, and only a man with the heart of a boy could have written it.

Other poems of Mr. Meredith's might be named that evolve a deeper philosophy—"Modern Love," for instance—but in "Love in the Valley" thought and feeling are perfectly wedded. The poet sang because he was inspired and impelled to sing, and had the story of boyish love to unfold. Radiant humanity glows through the lines, and yet everywhere the emotion is ideal; his passion dreams of the closest intimacy, but is always reverent. To enter into the soul of the verses is to feel morally and spiritually cleansed.

I am almost inclined to think it also Mr. Meredith's finest nature-poem. No eyes interpret nature like the eyes of a lover, and this pure-hearted boy sees things "hidden from the wise and prudent." Her beauty and the beauty of the world are one, and can only be thought of together—

"When from bed she rises clothed from neck to ankle  
In her long nightgown sweet as boughs of May,  
Beautiful she looks, like a tall garden lily,  
Pure from the night and splendid for the day."

Surely passion of that peculiarly sanctified quality has never been expressed in lovelier verse!

[H. J. Hadley Wood.]

## "SAUL."

My favourite poem? How many "Cynthias of the minute," pet odes, cherished elegies, treasured sonnets have been displaced in the course of years, either by the ruthless paw of the parodist, or by the discovery of that "better" which is the traditional foe of "the good"! I recall a friendly competition years ago among poetry-loving readers as to the favourite poem of each. The preponderance of votes given (without collusion) to Browning's "Saul" was remarkable. And why not? Think of the romantic yet reverent atmosphere in which the trite scriptural record is steeped; of the pliant and appropriate metre, the unflagging speed, the bright vistas, the horizon of the larger hope, the tranquillising scenery of its close, those eleven marvellous lines beginning—

"Anon at the dawn all that trouble had withered from earth."

Browning in composing "Saul" must have been haunted by Smart's "Song of David," which he often recited to friends. Yet how distinctly original is his David's utterance! "Saul" can be read through leisurely in half an hour, but its charm is inexhaustible, whether we read it in its comparative brevity of 1849, or in its expansion. What an eloquent critic has written of another great poem, is surely true of "Saul." "Here is not the elaborate finish which shows everywhere the fresh rasp of the file on its smooth and spruce excellence; this is faultless after the fashion of a flower or tree. Thus it has grown; not thus has it been carved."

[R. F. Mc., Whithy.]

## "APT VOGLER."

For those of us who are not literary critics, it is hard, indeed, to temper admiration with discretion in the appreciation of a favourite poem. It is such a dear friend—a silent comforter, a beautiful

memory, something that can never be lost, never grow wearisome to us.

Such a poem as this to many of us is Browning's "Abt Vogler." The ardent worshippers of the poet repeat the lines again and again with bated breath, quote and misquote on every possible occasion, but cannot spoil their beauty, cannot render even one line "hackneyed."

Browning has been called "unmusical," yet nowhere is the spirit of music more evident than in this poem. We see the soul of the musician striving for expression; he is maddened, intoxicated, as it were, with the glory of the structure of melody which his keys have helped to raise. The musician is in the world of his own music—for a moment he seems to see his ideal clearly, he beholds—

"... in the glare and glow  
Presences plain in the place..."

He stands upon the heights of genius; it is the hour of his life's triumph.... And then the wondrous palace of music is gone, never to be again, and the musician turns to Him who changes not—"builder and maker, Thou, of houses not made with hands!" He turns to Him because he has penetrated one of the greatest of life's secrets; he realises that good and not evil shall endure, and this is the keystone of the temple of Faith.

"There shall never be one lost good! What was, shall  
live as before;  
The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound...  
On the earth the broken arcs, in the heaven a perfect  
round."

The genius that has reached the pinnacle of success has gone down at times into the depths of failure, and understands in part why sorrow comes to us.

"Why rushed the discords in, but that harmony should be prized?"

And what earth sees not, Heaven beholds and appreciates—this is the lesson "Abt Vogler" would teach to those who have ears to hear. We find in the poem not the ethereal loveliness of Shelley, not the exuberance of Keats, nor the music of Tennyson; but, which is surely greater, an attempt at the solution of the problems of success and failure in the life of man.

[V. I. L., London.]

#### SHAKESPEARE'S 146TH SONNET.

"Poor soul the centre of my sinful earth."

This sonnet sums up the world-without-end conflict between body and spirit; the last quatrain contains the germ of all religious and philosophical systems of life, while the final couplet (echoing St. Paul's triumphant "O Grave, where is thy victory?") slays once and for all the terror of death. There are other sonnets of Shakespeare which are more "sugred" and have more beauty of poetic thought, but there is none (except only the immortal 116th) which so becomes part of a man's life: and literature, except it help a man to live, is but dust and ashes.

[E. W. H., W. Didsbury.]

#### "PIPPA PASSES."

If you were placed in a garden—a garden blooming with the most beautiful flowers, gathered together from every part of the world, and there told to choose from amongst the bewildering mass the flower which appealed to you most, the flower which to your eyes seemed the sweetest and fairest, would you not hesitate a little before the final decision? Would not all appeal to you in their several ways? Some by their subtle perfume, some by their perfection of form and colour, and some by the undefinable, irresistible charm of association, and when at last the choice was made (since it was inevitable) would there not lie hidden in your heart a secret regret for the almost equal beauty of the discarded ones? So it is with me—who am bidden to choose—proclaim to the world my favourite poem. Well? I have chosen and am listening with all the old wonder, with all the old joy and ecstasy, to Pippa as she passes on her way, singing, as unconscious as any bird of the beauty of her song or of the deep impression it makes on the hearts and lives of those who hear. Blessing she brings to her fellow creatures in the poem: I like to think of the greater blessing she brings to her fellow creatures in the world. I like to think of her always passing through the world, making for good: bearing with her the spirit of faith and hope.

Out of Browning's great mind, wedded to Browning's great love, Pippa was born, and the children of such a marriage live eternally.

[L.C., Jersey, C.I.]

### Competition No. 191 (New Series).

This week we offer a prize of One Guinea for the best paragraph, not exceeding 200 words, on any topical literary subject.

#### RULES.

Answers addressed, "Literary Competition, THE ACADEMY, 43, Chancery Lane, W.C.," must reach us not later than the first post of Wednesday, 20 May, 1903. Each answer must be accompanied by the coupon to be found on the second page of Wrapper, or it cannot enter into competition. Competitors sending more than one attempt at solution must accompany each attempt with a separate coupon; otherwise the first only will be considered. Contributions to be written on one side of the paper only.

## New Books Received.

#### THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL.

Orr (James), *Ritschlianism. Expository and Critical Essays* (Hodder and Stoughton) 6/0  
Taylor (Rev. C.), *The Shepherd of Hermas. Vol. I.* (S.P.C.K.) 2/0

#### POETRY, CRITICISM, AND BELLES LETTRES.

Ré (Aleph), *New Lays of Ind* (Burleigh) net 2/6  
Henley (W. E.), *A Song of Speed* (Nutt) 1/0  
Bell (Mrs. Hugh), *The Dean of St. Patrick's: A Play in Four Acts* (Arnold) net 2/6  
Hayman (Henry), *"The Passing of Arthur," in Greek Heroic Verse* (Spottiswoode) net 1/0  
Newell (William Wells), *The Legend of the Holy Grail* (Sever)

#### HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

Osborne (Charles E.), *The Life of Father Dolling* (Arnold) net 12/6  
Garnett (Richard), *English Literature. An Illustrated Record. From the Beginnings to the Age of Henry VIII. Vol. I.* (Heinemann) net 16/0  
Gosse (Edmund), *English Literature. An Illustrated Record. From Milton to Johnson. Vol. III.* (Heinemann) net 16/0  
Whiteway (R. S.), *Translated and Edited by, The Portuguese Expedition to Abyssinia in 1541-1543.* (Hakluyt Society)  
Fittis (Robert Scott), *Romantic Narratives from Scottish History and Tradition* (Gardner) 6/0  
Munro (Robert), *Schleiermacher* (Gardner) net 4/6

#### SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY.

Darroch (Alexander), *Herbart and the Herbartian Theory of Education* (Longmans) net 3/6  
Villa (Guido), *Contemporary Psychology* (Sonnenschein) net 10/6  
Yeats (W. B.), *Ideas of Good and Evil* (Bullen) 6/0  
Olenow (Frank G.), *The Geography of Disease.* (Cambridge University Press) 15/0  
Moulton (James Hope), *Two Lectures on the Science of Language* (Cambridge University Press) net 1/6

#### TRAVEL AND TOPOGRAPHY.

John, Bishop of Norwich, *My Life in Mongolia and Siberia* (S.P.C.K.) 2/6

#### EDUCATIONAL.

A. E. C. Kinderfreunden, *A Simple German Reading-Book* (Frowde) 1/0  
Scott (Sir Walter), *The Legend of Montrose (School Edition)* (Black) 2/0  
Hartog (W. G.), *Petits Contes de Fées* (Bullen) 0/6  
Kirkman (F. B.), *Voltaire's Zadig* (Bullen) 0/6  
Barbier (Paul), and Keen (Thomas), *Premier Cours de Grammaire Française* (Southall)  
Wilkins (A. S.), *Ciceronis: Rhetorica II.* (Clarendon Press) 3/6  
Broome (Florence), *Decorative Brush Work for Schools* (Chapman and Hall) net 7/6

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

Westell (W. Percival), *Country Rambles* (Drane) 10/6  
Hudson (W. H.), *Hampshire Days* (Longmans) net 10/6  
Wilson (A. M.), *Friends of Yesterday* (Bullen)  
The Paris Salon (Illustrated Catalogue) 1903 (Chatto and Windus) 3/0  
Trenayne (Harold), *The A.B.C. of the Dog* (Drane) 1/0  
Abbott (G. F.), *Macedonian Folklore* (Cambridge University Press) net 9/0  
Catalogue of Engraved Portraits of Noted Personages (Myers) net 7/6  
E. F. D., compiled by, *Hints to Girls* (S.P.C.K.) 1/0  
How Department Stores are Carried on in America (Richards) 2/6  
Niven (The late G. W.), *Edited by, Selections from the British Apollo* (Gardner)  
By Belinda's Husband, *Plain Papers on Subjects Light and Grave* (Gardner) net 2/6

#### NEW EDITIONS.

Gill (Harry), *The Village Church in the Olden Time* (Saxton)  
Kemp-Welch (Alice), *Done into English by, The Chateleine of Vergi* (Nutt) net 2/0  
Pascoe (Charles Eyre), *London of To-Day* (Jarrold) 6/0  
Lee-Hamilton (Eugene), *Dramatic Sonnets, Poems and Ballads* (Scott) 1/0  
Goodman (E. J.), *The Best Tour in Norway* (Low) net 2/6  
Clough (Blanche Athena), *A Memoir of Anne Jemima Clough* (Arnold) 6/0  
Foe (Edgar Allen), *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (Ward Lock) 0/6  
Pain (Barry), *De Omnibus and Another Englishwoman's Love Letters* (Unwin) 0/6  
White (Percy), *The West End* (Everett) 0/6  
Munro (A. C.), *Practical Guide to Genoa and the Rivières* (Simpkin) 2/0  
Trollope (Anthony), *Framley Parsonage* (Lane) net 1/6  
Stuttford (Charles), *Translated by, The Story of Cupid and Psyche* (Nutt) net 10/6  
Don Juan XVIIIth and XVIIIth Cantos (Andrews) 1/0  
Sladen (Douglas), *The Admiral* (Nash) 0/6  
Eliot (George), *Romola* (Blackwood) 0/6  
Munro (Neil), *John Splendid* (Macmillan) net 0/6  
Wister (Owen), *Philosophy 4* (Macmillan) net 2/0  
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